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THE EDITORS' OUTLOOK

THE Christmas season is a good time in which to meditate upon the importance of child nurture and training. The Christ-child in the manger may be permitted to symbolize for us all of the wonderful possibilities that lie latent in every new-born babe, as it is intrusted by the heavenly Father to the care of the home and the society into which it is born. In so far as that home and that society are Christian, and in so far as they appreciate the sacredness and importance of child life and understand the laws of its inner unfolding, under the stimulating guidance of wise nurture and training each such life may be expected to realize in the largest possible measure its splendid possibilities.

"WHAT then is child nurture? It is a sacred, priestly method whereby souls are brought up from infancy so as not to think otherwise than that they belong to Christ, and so that blessedness for them shall consist in knowing and serving Him and their greatest misfortune in becoming separated from Him in any way whatsoever."

This remarkable definition of the Christian nurture of children comes to us out of the early eighteenth century. It is part of the conditional will and testament sent by Bishop Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf back to the Moravian congregation at Herrnhut, after he had boarded a sailing vessel bound for the American colonies in 1742. His journey did not prove disastrous, as he anticipated it might, and he was permitted to return after a successful missionary journey to the North American colonies. During subsequent years, from 1742 until his death in 1760, Zinzendorf sought consistently to put into practice the fundamental principle of child nurture, "preservation versus rescue," implied in this definition. How well he succeeded is evidenced by the enviable success of the Moravian church in the religious training of their children and young people during two centuries of commendable history.

A friendly observer of the Moravian practice, writing a half century after Zinzendorf's definition had been formulated, pays this tribute to the religious-educational work of the Brethren:

"From the very first it has been one of the chief concerns of the Unity of the Brethren and, therefore, one of the most important subjects considered at their conferences and synods, to provide for the children such continuous training as would permit them to grow gradually to the type of character required of them by their high destiny as Christians and citizens of the state. The guiding principle of the Brethren in the training of children is and will ever be the apostolic rule: bring up your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. To this end the chief concern of the Brethren is that the children from their tenderest years shall be protected against evil example and harmful impressions, in short, as far as possible, from every danger of being led astray into evil. Not only shall they be thus protected, but it is equally the concern of their elders that the love of God in Christ Jesus shall be planted in their tender hearts and that which is good shall be made attractive to them; that, as children of God, who created and redeemed them, they may live wholly for his honor and good pleasure and be useful and serviceable to human society."

THE following proclamation by President Coolidge, regarding American Education Week, was received from the United States Commissioner of Education, John J. Tigert, too late for publication in the November CHURCH SCHOOL. Its significance for the cause of education in the United States justifies its publication in full in this issue, especially since most of our readers will receive their copies of this number in advance of November 18, the beginning of American Education Week.

By the President of the United States
A Proclamation

From its earliest beginnings, America has been devoted to the cause of education. This country was founded on the ideal of ministering to the individual. It was realized that this must be done by the institutions of religion and government. In order that there might be a properly educated clergy and well-trained civil magistrates, one of the first thoughts of the early settlers was to provide for a college of liberal culture, while for the general diffusion of knowledge, primary schools were established. This course was taken as the necessary requirement of enlightened society.

Such a policy, once adopted, has continued to grow in extent. With the adoption of the Federal Constitution and the establishment of free governments in the states of the Union, there was additional reason for broadening the opportunity for education. Our country adopted the principle of self-government by a free people. Those who were worthy of being free were worthy of being educated. Those who had the duty and responsibility of government must necessarily have the education with which to discharge the obligations of citizenship. The sovereign had to be educated. The sovereign had become the people. Schools and universities were provided by the various governments, and founded and fostered by private charity, until their buildings dotted all the land.

The willingness of the people to bear the burdens of maintaining these institutions, and the patriotic devotion of an army of teachers, who, in many cases, might have earned larger incomes in other pursuits, have made it possible to accomplish results with which we may well be gratified. But the task is not finished, it has only been begun.

We have observed the evidences of a broadening vision of the whole educational system. This has included a recognition that education must not end with the period of school attendance, but must be given every encouragement thereafter. To this end the night schools of the cities, the moonlight schools of the southern Appalachian countries, the extension work of the colleges and universities, the provision for teaching technical, agricultural and mechanical arts, have marked out the path to a broader and more widely diffused national culture. To insure the permanence and continuing improvement of such an educational policy, there must be the fullest pub-

lic realization of its absolute necessity. Every American citizen is entitled to a liberal education. Without this, there is no guarantee for the permanence of free institutions, no hope of perpetuating self-government. Despotism finds its chief support in ignorance. Knowledge and freedom go hand in hand.

In order that the people of the nation may think on these things, it is desirable that there should be an annual observance of Educational Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States, do hereby proclaim the week beginning on the eighteenth of November, next, as National Education Week, and urge its observance throughout the country. I recommend that the state and local authorities cooperate with the civic and religious bodies to secure its most general and helpful observance, for the purpose of more liberally supporting and more effectively improving the educational facilities of our country.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE, in the City of Washington, this twenty-sixth day of September, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty-three, and of the Independence of the United States, the One Hundred and Forty-eighth.

(Signed) Calvin Coolidge.

PRESS dispatches from Washington, D. C., under date of October 15, commend highly the program of the National Citizenship conference arranged for and conducted under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. One of the principal topics considered at the conference was the question of prohibition enforcement. The speakers on this subject included Prohibition Commissioner Haynes, Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania, and Senator Borah of Idaho.

Resolutions were prepared by the Educational Committee of the conference, looking toward a nation-wide concerted educational and legislative effort in behalf of prohibition enforcement. Resolutions as adopted by the conference include the following:

1. In every state and in every community, citizens should know how far scientific temperance instruction is being given in the public schools.

2. Churches and Sunday schools should increase and renew efforts for pledge signing.

3. The International Sunday School Lesson Committee, church temperance agencies and publication boards should be urged to make adequate provision for a ten years' program of training in habits of sobriety and clean living.

4. Increased and adequate provision should be made, through research agencies, for gathering accurate data on the personal, financial, economic and civic results of prohibition; for cooperation among educational agencies in preparing this material for effective popular presentation and for systematic distribution.

5. It is important that there be a comprehensive and persistent campaign to change the ideas and customs of society with reference to the use of alcoholic liquors.

6. We suggest an increased and widespread use of charts, pictures, stereopticons and moving pictures.

7. It is essential that there be developed further methods and processes by which citizens generally and young people, especially, shall be trained in the obligations and practice of citizenship and enlisted in the work of law enforcement and so be prepared for effective citizenship in the Republic.

8. The educational and civic agencies of our land must be enlisted in the work of creating or rebuilding a respect for law.

9. The forces of education must reconceive their task, gird themselves for new adventure, and organize for at least a ten years' campaign.

10. Strong legislation, with the laws well enforced, can do much to create a public conscience and to reduce greatly, if not wholly suppress, the liquor traffic. That such legislation and obedience to law be secured, there must be a temperance mindedness in the ranks of the people. This is distinctively an educational task and it is most vital.

REPRESENTATIVES of the twelve leading Protestant denominations have joined in the incorporation of a new religious-educational body known as The Institute for the Advancement of Christian Knowledge. This has just been announced by Judge Henry Wade Rogers, LL.D., president of the Institute. The first step in the Institute's program, which contemplates the study of religious problems and engaging in religious surveys and research, will be to secure the publication of an *American Encyclopædia of Christianity.*

Plans for issuing the encyclopædia for American Protestants are already under way, with an editorial board of nine Protestant scholars, headed by Dr. Joseph Cullen Ayer, professor of ecclesiastical history in the Divinity School of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in Philadelphia. The work will be in twelve octavo volumes, extensively illustrated, of approximately a million words each, and will require six years to be completed. The editorial policy will be strictly impartial, from an objective point of view, and it is proposed to have at least two different writers handle subjects which are open to controversy.

"The need for a body like the Institute for the Advancement of Christian Knowledge," its president, Judge Rogers, said, "arose out of present-day conditions. This is a day of a new and widespread Religious Renaissance. It is an hour in which the Protestant Church of the United States faces new duties, hears a new call to new activities. The purposes of the Institute, in general, are to function as a laboratory of religion, where competent workers can engage in research, and where church problems can be studied."

The publisher of the encyclopædia is Robert Appleton. Permanent headquarters for the Institute will be established in New York City.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING is assuming inspiring proportions in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. During the past twelve months over twenty thousand certificates were issued for the completion of one or more course units of the Standard Training Course. Within a year 126 standard training schools have been held with an enrollment of 15,597. So great is the demand for these schools from Conference organizations and local communities that the General Sunday School Board is unable to supply approved instructors for all schools requested.

THE COURAGE THAT CHRISTMAS INSPIRES

ONCE more we hail the day which is immemorially associated with the advent of the Prince of Peace. Once more we join with an innumerable multitude in the prophetic song which the angels sang to the shepherds of Bethlehem. Shall we be able, in the face of the bewildering spectacle which the world presents today, to greet the day with the old-time gladness and sing the song with the old-time enthusiasm?

The answer will depend upon the light that is within us rather than upon our ability to interpret the evidence that is furnished by passing events. That there is much in present conditions throughout the world that is exceedingly perplexing there can be no question. We are awed and saddened in the face of the bewildering mystery of sin and sorrow which confronts us in whatever direction we turn, and the thought of it all will inevitably introduce minor notes into much of our Christmas music.

Nevertheless, we decline to take our places among the prophets of pessimism who tell us that Christianity has failed and that civilization is on the way to collapse and ruin. We do this, in the first place, because we know Jesus Christ as Friend and Saviour and because the reality of spiritual forces is not a mere matter of theory with us, but a matter of vital personal experience. His spirit quickens us. His love shed abroad in our hearts fills us with sympathy for all human suffering and with a great longing to lead the whole world into this high and emancipating fellowship. And we know that these are not merely individual experiences. They are rather the common experiences of millions of men and women who have taken Christ's yoke upon them and learned of him.

WE cannot believe that, with this vast multitude of living witnesses scattered throughout the world, the cause for which Christ suffered and died is to come to naught, that the prophecy of a coming "peace on earth and good will among men" will at last fail of fulfillment. It is unfortunate that these witnesses are not in closer fellowship with one another, that they are often prevented by external divisions from understanding and cooperating with one another. A more intimate fellowship would inspire a larger confidence in the whole body of true believers and at the same time enable them to exert their united strength against the forces that make for strife and hatred and reliance upon material forces. But, unfortunate as are the divisions and misunderstandings between the followers of the Prince of Peace, they do not destroy the silent influence of their lives. This influence continues to work like the leaven in the meal, and the results are seen in the noble discontent that is today finding utterance in every direction. From all the nations, from prostrate Germany, from sorely smitten France, from every section of the vast British Empire, and even from prosperous and complacent America, come voices of protest against the folly which refuses to learn from the bitter experiences of recent years and still insists on trying to maintain peace and establish civilization by brute force.

There is no disputing the fact that five years after the close of the war that was to end war conditions throughout the world are distressingly disappointing. But let us be thankful, at any rate, for the divine dissatisfaction with the outcome that is so well nigh universal. It means that spiritual forces, after all, are not impotent, that the ideals for which millions suffered are not dead, and it furnishes to those who live in the spirit a basis for confidence in the final outcome of our yearnings and our struggles which the temporary defeat of our hopes cannot destroy.

Just how the problems that perplex the nations today are to be solved we do not know. It may be that further baptisms of anguish will be required to destroy our old confidence in the flesh and to bring us to a victorious reliance upon the spirit of love and justice and brotherhood. But however difficult the road along which the world must travel in order to reach that consummation, we dare to believe that, though perhaps with many stumblings and backslidings, it will continue its quest till the goal is attained. The hope awakened in the hearts of men by the angel song can never die out. It has lived through long periods of darkness and chaos in the past, and there is no reason why it should perish in the present crisis. For it does not depend upon external facts which we are able but inadequately to interpret, but rather on reliance upon the mighty workings of these spiritual forces whereby the God of love is able to subdue all things unto himself.

AND so, while we grieve because of the sorrow and confusion under which so many millions of our brothers are groaning today, we are not in despair. We walk by faith and not by sight. He who sent forth the first little group of his followers with the command that they should make disciples of all the nations, gave them also the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." In the confidence inspired by this promise we face the future with calmness and courage.

E. B. CHAPPELL.

International Golden Rule Dinner

Sunday, December Second

FOR the sake of the fifty thousand orphans of the Near East, and in memory of their fathers and mothers whose lives were sacrificed because they were adherents to the Christian faith, the International Near East Conference, representing fourteen countries, asks that December Second be observed by a dinner as simple as that of the orphanage meals every day of the year, and that the amount of money thus saved be contributed for the care and training of the orphans of the Near East. Surely a great religious uplift will come to all peoples who can be led to apply the Golden Rule to these children who are without a home and without a country.

Christmas and Civilization

By Lynn Harold Hough

CIVILIZATION is a strange and wonderful word. It means so much that it rather scorns definitions. How can you imprison the progress of all the ages in a tight little formula all ready for a dictionary? For a pocket dictionary you can say nothing at all. Even an unabridged dictionary has all too little room for a real definition. An article for an Encyclopedia is better. But really it requires the history of the nations of the western world to do the thing well. And even this history comes trailing wonderful memories of grey old nations in the East. Civilization is the orderly and cultured life which mankind has achieved after centuries of striving. And there, after all the disclaimers, one has perpetrated a definition!

Now a wonderful thing about this achievement which we call civilization is that it is all edged about by beautiful Christmas trees, and that in the most unexpected places all through it these same trees are standing. The sweetest gentleness of civilization is the gift of Christmas to the world. The beautiful love of childhood with a kind of wistful reverence all about it is the gift of Christmas to the world. If one babe had not lain in a manger no other child would have found the lovely mystery of gladness all about its birth which is the glory of such thousands of homes today. The idea of service is in great measure a gift of Christmas to mankind. If God had not so loved that he gave, men would not have found the secret of unselfish loving and giving. The making of religion human is the achievement of Christmas. The song of the angels, because a child was born, and all the glad wonder of the shepherds have given a new accent to the experience of religion among men. It has all the bright gay charm of the enticing smile of a little child. The turning of philosophy into an eager passion is the achievement of Christmas. Philosophy talked of "The Absolute" and while quickening men's minds left their hearts cold. Christmas looked up into the face of a gentle God and called him "Father." Civilization knows of few more wonderful transformations than that which came when men who had said "The Absolute" began to say "Our Father." The way of a woman through the paths of civilized life was made a very different thing when once she began to walk among the Christmas trees. For one child had glorified one mother, and then transfigured all motherhood, and set all womanhood upon the hilltops where the golden light of the sunrise shines.

There are no end of other things of course. But when once we begin to study this fabric we call civilization we discover that the best of it comes from the fashion in which the meaning of Christmas has been woven into the very center of its design. The babe in the manger held many gifts clasped in his small hands. And among the best of them was a soul for that orderly and cultural life which is the fine flower of man's life in the world.

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OF RELIGION

THE IMPOTENT STAR

By Margaret Slattery

THOSE lamps of Hope!
Full many a night
Adown the long dark years
They shone above man's doubts and fears.
Then God chose one
To tell the weary world that Hope
To dwell with man had come—
Lay safe and sheltered from the chill
Within a manger on the hill—
From highest heaven to low horizon's bar
There burst upon the dark—His Star!

Yet its message on that night when it shone down over the cold hills of Bethlehem seemed but a dream, a vision, *words* of utter folly and the child but a poor impotent cry upon the breast of a young mother unknown, of no consequence whatever to the great Roman Empire that ruled the world.

The world was very wicked, as it is now. Somewhere in the darkness of that night, man murdered his brother; for gold men slew their fellows along some lonely Jericho road, or stole from householders, wakened in terror from their slumbers, the precious things they loved and cherished—even as now. Somewhere in the darkness, youth took its first steps into the land of the profligate and the prodigal, somewhere men and women lay drunk with wines or crazed with drugs, somewhere little children, wakeful and hungry, cried in vain for food, somewhere men planned and plotted, playing nation against nation and race against race, as pawns whose skillful handling would bring riches and power to the victor, poverty and defeat to the vanquished—even as now. How unutterably weak and futile seemed the star—what a mockery its promise of peace, good will and salvation—then as now! Yet it shone. To what purpose?

The Purpose Being Fulfilled

That is the question asked often in scorn by the careless and unthinking. It is well that we who tell the beautiful story of the shepherds and the angels to our children on Christmas night should ask the question of ourselves, in sincere, honest fashion. The adult mind often shrinks from questioning lest it be disturbed, and so it misses much. The star shone over the place where lay the Saviour of the world. Is he saving it? The casual observer says no, but to the student who looks below the froth of life's surfaces, the *purpose* for which he came is being even now fulfilled.

Man has always found it easy to accept things as they are—hard to change them. His pitiful little phrases reveal his proneness to fatalism. "You can't change human nature," "Man has always been selfish and always will be," "You cannot have a warless world, it is against nature," "Man is out *for himself,* he will *never* consider his neighbor *as himself.* It can't be done." It is a strong array of negatives the average man summons for his argument. But truth is positive. Man, inspired by the teachings and life of the One whose birth was heralded by the star, saved from death of mind and spirit by his love and passion, has climbed slowly on and up toward the goal of the kingdom.

The star glistens as I think of the opportunities for education that have come to the sons and daughters, even the *daughters* of the very poor, so that multitudes with the will to learn *may* learn. When the star first shone, knowledge was not for such as these. They were slaves, born into slavery, perpetuating slavery. Today man is not legally bought and sold in the public market. Only in hidden places of the earth upon which as yet not even a beam from the star has fallen, is he sold at all. I know that he is still the slave of greed and selfishness, the tool of power, but he is rapidly breaking these chains. His mind trained, his intellect freed, self-owned and self-directed, given his liberty by the teachings of the King of the new kingdom announced by the star, mankind will one day win complete freedom.

Far-Reaching Beams of the Star

Black as is the shame of Christendom, deep as is the sin of its failure to rise to its ideals, one has but to live a few months in lands where there is *no* knowledge of the star, to realize that man, slowly and by the pathway it revealed, is marching on toward the light. He knows then the difference between light and darkness.

Man accepts disease. He often says in words of resignation, both in the poetry and prose of every land, that it is a strange dispensation of Providence on the judgment of the gods. But the star points toward *health.* Yellow fever wiping out whole towns, wrecking hearts and homes, was for many years "a visitation of the Almighty"—bitter were the tears and fervent the petitions that he would stay his hand. Then men, young, courageous, clean and strong, gifted with god-like patience, went down to the *breeding* places of yellow fever and utterly destroyed them. That "dispensation of Providence" comes no more. In some such manner some day shall all disease be vanquished. Already man, his intellect enkindled, trained, set free by the fundamental principles of the kingdom over whose dawning the star shone, has conquered a formidable list of enemies to health and happiness.

There was a day when man, watching the fruits of his toil wither and die under a burning sun, cursed God and wandered away discouraged, subsisting upon whatever he could find until necessity forced him under new conditions to begin again. But he learned to think, to act, to conquer—to reforest his lands or sink his wells down to unbelievable depths, or lead the waters of far distant melting snows into his desert. And the curse of famine, in dread of which he had offered his sacrifices and his prayers, was no longer to him a terrible act of God. He had turned his face, through knowledge, toward the light of the star.

[1]Copyright, 1923, by Margaret Slattery.

Childhood is but just beginning to feel the blessings of the far-reaching beams of that star. The new kingdom, its Founder said, was to be *theirs,* but it is a kingdom not yet won. Only the outposts have been taken. Last summer, on a humid morning, with the thermometer high and rapidly rising, I watched the procession of older brothers and sisters, babies in their arms and every baby *ill,* making their way to the Floating Hospital. A few mothers there were, not many, they must be at home to look after the rest of the family. The long line moved slowly—there were so many more sick babies than the authorities had dreamed. Such piteous soft moaning, such whimpers of pain, or such still white faces and dull eyes. But at night, when the ship came back, after its long day where the cool breezes sweep the harbor, fresh milk, fresh air, quiet sleep had transformed so many of the babies and their little caretakers that the white-robed nurses seemed like fairy godmothers indeed. Some of the little patients, very ill, would stay on board that night and for days, until health came back. Over the bow of that little ship, riding gently at anchor, shone a beam from the star. The city streets that night were hot and breathless. Children sat strangely quiet and listless or quarrelled petulantly. Then some one gave a shout of joy. There was a scampering into the houses and a quick return in every sort of makeshift bathing suit. The cool water from the great hose at the hydrant poured into the street, made pools in every hollow and ran like a river along the gutters. Laughter and splashing, relief and returning color to little cheeks, damp refreshing sidewalks brought hope to parents' anxious faces. The great city cared about its children. The fruit stands covered with netting, the milk and ice stations were crowded with customers; the dispensary doors were wide open; the district nurse was hurrying toward a near-by home to examine the case of a little five-year-old who, tomorrow, unless all signs failed, would stand upon two straight, strong legs, a cripple no longer. Over all this shone the beams of the star of Him who said: "Of such is the kingdom."

The Kingdom Will Be Won

But they had not reached far into the darkness. All over the world, in Christendom itself and in lands where no whisper of its shining had come, children unaware of their birthright toiled in the factory, in the field, in the mine, on city streets, in hot attics and damp cellars, so unwilling, so amazingly *slow,* are men to surrender to them their kingdom. But it will be theirs. The star shines more brightly for them on this holy night than ever before in the long centuries since it announced the birth of a Child whose kingdom, when finally won, should be filled with peace and rejoice in good will.

To those dreamers who have watched through the ages, with anxious hearts and straining eyes, for the signs of a coming day when men should sit down together to talk over with honesty and courage the affairs of nations, before ever they should blow the trumpet, clash the sword and call their hosts to arm for war, progress has seemed slow indeed. But today they look with a gleam of hope in their eyes. Serious-minded men have been sitting about a council table and they have devised a plan by which what was but a few months since an enemy nation may be saved from financial ruin. Other groups of men and women are in earnest discussion over the problems of drugs and the barter in women. There are some things besides war, they find, which no nation, standing alone, can control. It must be united action if the unspeakable curse is to be removed. They are resolved to remove it. In the council chamber sit these leaders of nations, facing problems so difficult and so pregnant with hope or despair for the world, that they quail before them—yet they face them. National selfishness, national ambition, fear, distrust, greed and hate sit at that council table. Faint beams from the star reach it. Now and again one quotes a principle of the kingdom, but it passes. Self-interest again triumphs and waiting armies begin covertly to polish their arms. Will the star fail? Will the star prevail? The men leave their places—another day they will return and talk it over again. But they *are talking.* It is with the *mind* now that they are fighting a furious battle. God grant that in no hasty moment, they may resort to any other means. The kingdom will be won in time. What if in our day, and through our efforts, the outposts might be captured for the King?

. . . . . .

Our great city is very still now and dark. It is past midnight. Tomorrow the excited children will reach out their hands to bestow gifts and hold them outstretched, eager to *receive.* There will be joy and some pain, smiles and a few tears and countless happy shouts of Merry Christmas. There is a beam of light across yonder church tower as it reaches up into the dark. Is it from the star? How hard the King has tried to reach the inmost soul of the church, to make it, in every place, the very foundation of his kingdom. So many times it is that the star shines full upon it, but sometimes the beams, strong as they are, cannot penetrate through the fog of formalism, of dogma, of pride, of self-seeking, of indifference. Yet there will come a day when the King shall completely possess his church. It will come when you and I see the meaning of the kingdom so clearly that we will give time, thought, energy, gold, life itself to the doing of our full share toward the establishment of it upon the earth. We are doing that now? Oh, no! None of us are. We are only giving spare time, easy margins in gold and goods, left-over energies. Many of us are only giving Sunday, and only within the church. We dimly see the bare outlines of that kingdom whose completion will demand all man has and is. But it will one day be complete. Children fearless, glorious in health and beauty, shall play unharmed in the streets of it; there will be freedom and laughter and work which one loves to do; there will be the deep satisfaction of accomplishment. Men and women will go about in it learning, discovering, feeling the supreme joy of service rendered in love. They will be unhampered by greed, self-pity, envy or pride. It will be *life.* But "unless ye become as little children, ye cannot enter."

. . . . . .

It is Christmas morning. The stars have gone from the cold sky, but the star lingers in one's soul. Nineteen hundred years and more since it shone on the shepherds asleep in the hills, on the mother, her babe pressed close to her heart—and still the kingdom is not won! What patience, what divine confidence thou hast in man! Can

(Continued on page 137)

The Annunciation
Dante Gabriel Rossetti

THE GIFT

A Christmas Service

By Margaret Burnett

PREPARATIONS for our church-school Christmas service were well thought out in November. The committee decided to give the Nativity story in pictures, posed by pupils, and explained by Bible readings and familiar carols.

Just as the plan was worked out in detail, the December Scribner's appeared; and we found, beautifully illustrated, the account of an identical program which for a number of years had been given in a Connecticut community, except that theirs was more elaborate as to setting and costumes.

It is because our service was easy to prepare (needing only the "properties" of the manger and the star), not difficult to give and yet artistic and greatly enjoyed by the children, that its program is suggested to other schools, who may have had, and had, and *had* platform exercises! This is the real Christmas story pictured by interested children for other children equally interested.

The curtain may be drawn after each scene or tableau, and soft music should be played between the scenes.

When "star" is visible, it is the only light. During the "manger" scenes, the light in manger is the only one. Footlights may be used for Prophet and Annunciation.

Part One — His Gift to Us

Prelude (*violin and piano*) played until first tableau is ready and while audience is being seated. From cantata *Bethlehem,* by Maunder.

Tableau—*The Prophet.* (Use as illustration, Sargent's Isaiah. See page 118.)
Read Micah 5: 2. Isaiah 9: 6, 7.

Hymn: *O Little Town of Bethlehem.*

Tableau—*The Annunciation.* (Use as illustration Rossetti's, Burne-Jones', or Fra Angelico's *Annunciation.*
Read Luke 1: 26, 28:

Now . . . the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin . . . and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou art highly favored, the Lord is with thee . . . blessed art thou among women.

Solo (*or hymn*)—*Advent* or any familiar Christmas song).

Scene—Appearance of Star. (*It moves slowly across stage* (*back*) *from "east" to center.*)

Hymn (*during progress of star*): *Holy Night.*

Tableau—Shepherds. (*They gaze upward, profiles to audience.*) Read Luke 2: 8-14, to words "praising God and saying."

Response (*from distance, if possible from above*): "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." (*This should be sung by girls' voices.*)

Scene—The Manger. (*Mary and Joseph, a light in the manger representing the Child.*) (Use as illustration, Correggio's *Holy Night.*)

Hymn (*by Primary Department*): *Away in a Manger*—(Martin Luther's cradle song).

Scene (*same as before*). Enter Shepherds. (*They gaze and then kneel at side.*)
Read Luke 2: 15-16.

Hymn: *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.*

Tableau—Manger. (*Same as at first, Mary and Joseph; the shepherds having gone away.*)
Read Matthew 2: 1-2.

Hymn: *We Three Kings of Orient Are.*
(*After singing one stanza, first king enters, with slaves, gifts, etc., while second stanza is sung. Kings enter at appropriate time during singing of other stanzas; group themselves in front or at side of manger.*)

Part Two — Our Gift to Him

Curtain is drawn, showing manger, still lighted, in center of stage, alone.

Two girls of same height (see directions) come to front of stage and hold jar for offering.

School, and other congregation, come forward and deposit offering, returning to seats.

(*Music, "camel-train" music from Bethlehem*)

Offertory Prayer—by Superintendent (very short).

Hymn: *Love Came Down at Christmas* (words by Christina Rossetti), or any familiar hymn.

Benediction

Directions for Giving the Service

For this service, the usual stage with drop curtain and footlights was used. While it was a somewhat crude affair, surrounded by green denim curtains and with resounding board floor, we covered the floor with rugs and paid no attention to the denim. It served for the fields and stable and the open sky, and by keeping the lights focused on the actors, it was merely a neutral background.

The emphasis was upon the story, bound together by music, which was never "solo" music, but symbolic and explanatory. That of Maunder's cantata was used.

The carols, familiar and beloved, were sung by the congregation. There should be strong enough support in the singing so that when the interest of the children is diverted, as it will be by the entrance of the star, or the appearance of the kings, the singing does not slump. Our church-school hour being noon, daylight was kept out by use of the dark green shades used for showing stereopticon pictures.

The star is easily made. In the cover of a pasteboard box cut nearly as large a five-pointed star as the space permits. (See directions for making a five-pointed star on page 131.) Over this paste thick white paper that light may be diffused and the Mazda lamp inside rendered invisible. This lamp, with extension cord, should be firmly secured through a hole in the upper end of the box, to prevent twisting, and the surface of the box entirely covered (except, of course, the star) with black cambric that all light rays may be shut off except those coming through the front. Our star was fairly effective, but it would have been a better behaved heavenly body if a smoothly-running pulley had moved it to position. We did not rehearse our star, believing that a mere inanimate object could not thwart the human will. There must have been an unseen tack which was the occasion of a serious deflection in orbit. Better rehearse the star along with the other actors!

For the manger, a quaint old Dutch bread-tray, looking like a cradle, filled with hay, was used. Inside, below the line of vision of the congregation, we placed an electric flash light, or lamp with extension cord, powerful enough to illuminate brightly the face of Mary. The effect was beautiful, quite out of proportion to the labor involved.

The "gold, frankincense and myrrh" were in brass, silver, and inlaid jars and boxes the committee remembered seeing in the homes of acquaintances, or their own. All that is needed is a gorgeous Oriental effect which is produced by brass or other non-precious metal.

Whenever the curtain rose on scene or tableau, there was a pause only long enough to let the children in the congregation take in the pose and its meaning, for young children cannot, as we elders do, look and listen at the identical second. Then the Bible selection was read, clearly, slowly, not loudly, by a woman who stood near the piano, the only place where there was a light. At once on the fall of the curtain following a tableau and without announcement, the pianist should start playing the opening measures of the selected carol. Then the hymn should be sung without words or notes, for to turn on the lights for so short a time makes a bad break. If the carols are well prepared, during the joyful weeks preceding Christmas, they go very well, and every learned-by-heart hymn is an eternal asset.

Generally speaking, safety pins played a crucial part in the costuming. Mary's blue cheesecloth dress was sewed, cut like a straight, slip-over-the-head dress, with seams under the arms only, but I believe we made no others. The costumes for the body servants, the soldier attendants and the three kings can be constructed out of table covers, curtains, lengths of brocade or any colorful material, particularly in stripes. Follow the pictures of Tissot or any correct Orientalist, as it is as easy to have the details right as wrong.

Some of our shepherds wore their own khaki-colored sheepskin lined coats, turned wrong side out and tied across the shoulders. Some sort of long tunic should be worn underneath to hide American trousers and boots. A tunic that answers every purpose can be made by cutting a hole large enough for the head to slip through in the middle of an oblong of cotton cloth long enough to reach the floor (or nearly so) front and back, and catching the sides together here and there with safety pins.

The prophet may be either Micah or Isaiah. We chose Isaiah and posed him after the Sargent frieze with hands uplifted. He wore a pair of brown rep curtains. It sounds simple, and was. But as dresser it is a good plan to secure some one who can get a drapery effect quickly and without fussiness. Fussiness spoils it all. The Oriental wears flowing lines, and a bit of twine or a strip of cloth used as a girdle is better in effect than too great care in arrangement.

For the angel of the annunciation we chose a tall girl and posed her and Mary after the picture by Rossetti, Mary kneeling, the angel tall and straight. A stalk of lilies was held toward Mary, who wore the same blue dress throughout, but after the annunciation used the white headdress of the Hebrew married woman, and a deeper blue mantle. Mary should be most carefully chosen, not only for her purity and beauty of face, but for the feeling and dignity she is able to give to her poses.

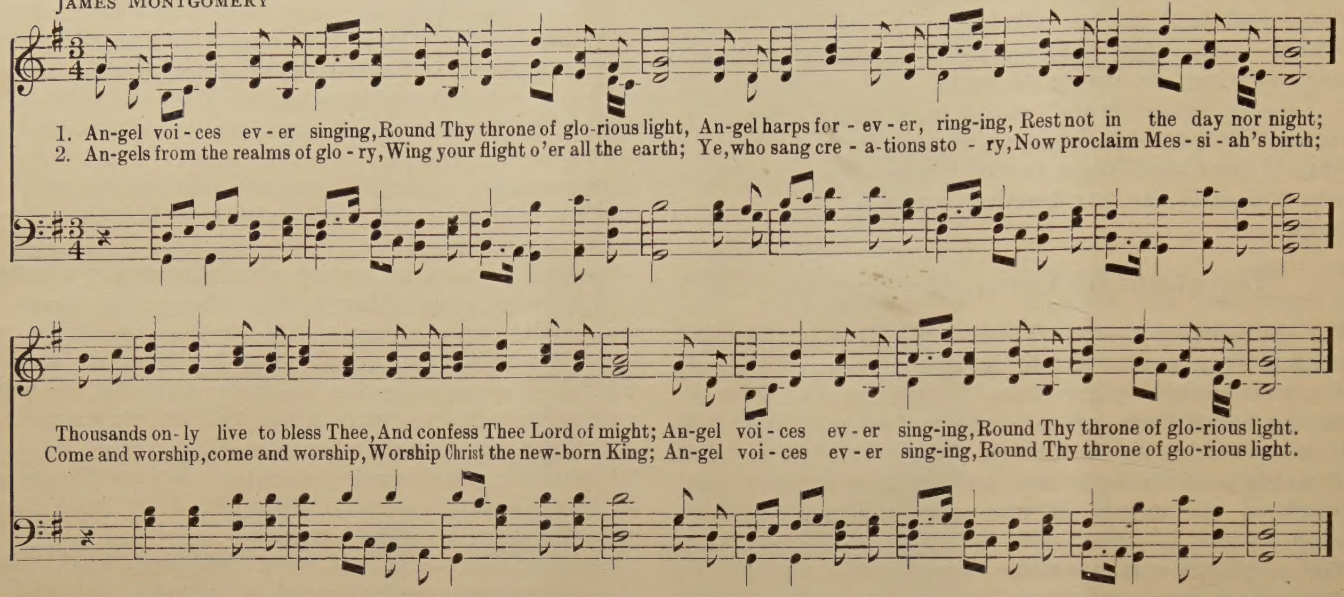
For the kings and their attendants one may use imagination. They must be gorgeous, naturally, and majestic. Damask and velvet curtains are a boon here. It is good training in a sort of history seldom taught to let the children, while practicing the carols, discuss the nationality of the kings, their traditional names, the correct costumes to be worn, whether their attendants would be likely to be slaves or soldiers, in what sort of jar the precious spice, or gold, would be contained; whether they would, as the usual Christmas card indicates, come alone to the meeting; why they would bring slaves and soldiers, and many other topics; all adding interest to the ensuing program. It might be well also to explain that the kings really came at Epiphany or "Twelfth Night," that their

(Continued on page 139)

Angel Voices

Text Composite
FRANCIS POTT
JAMES MONTGOMERY

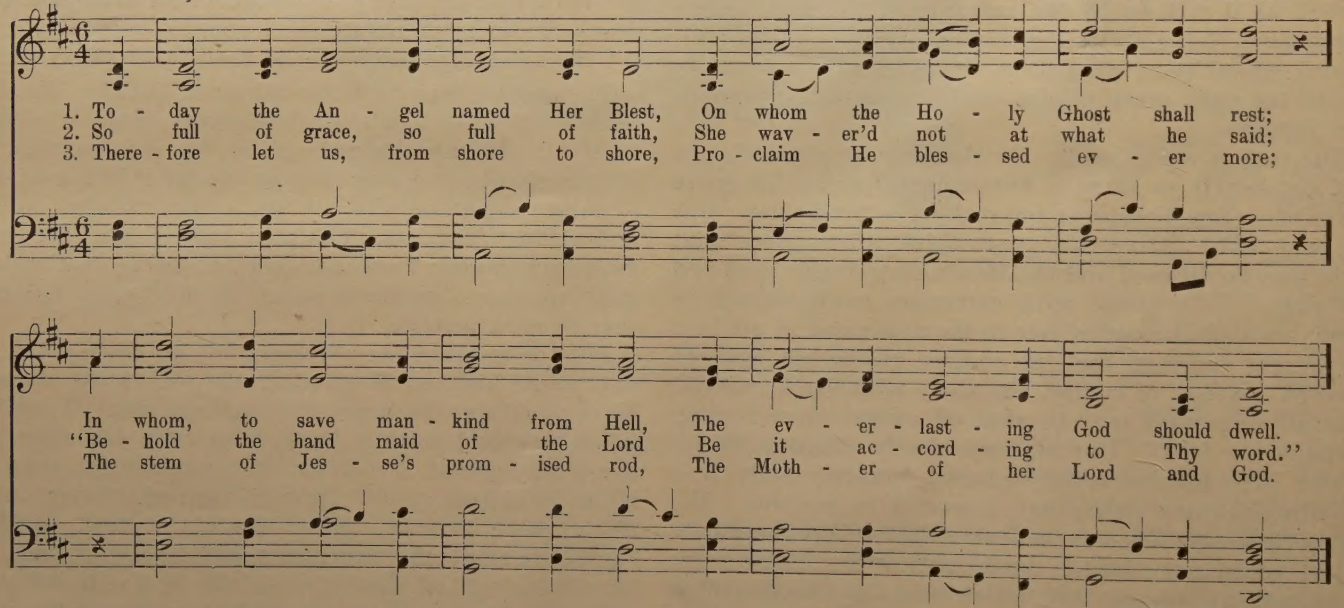
Ancient French Noel
Arr. A. VINCENT BENNETT


1. An-gel voi-ces ev-er singing, Round Thy throne of glo-rious light, An-gel harps for-ev-er, ring-ing, Rest not in the day nor night;
2. An-gels from the realms of glo-ry, Wing your flight o'er all the earth; Ye, who sang cre-a-tions sto-ry, Now proclaim Mes-si-ah's birth;
Thousands on-ly live to bless Thee, And confess Thee Lord of might; An-gel voi-ces ev-er sing-ing, Round Thy throne of glo-rious light.
Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ the new-born King; An-gel voi-ces ev-er sing-ing, Round Thy throne of glo-rious light.

The Annunciation

Portion of Hymn by
JOHN MASON NEALE
found in "Hymns for Children"

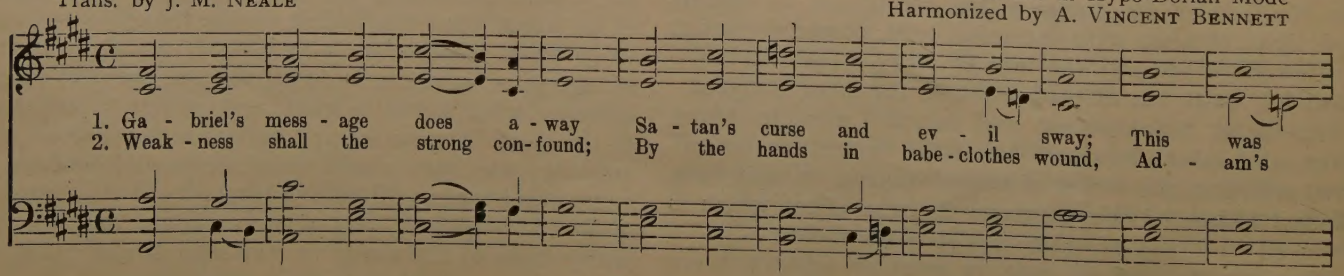
MICHAEL PRÆTORIUS, 1609
Harmonized by
A. VINCENT BENNETT


1. To-day the An-gel named Her Blest, On whom the Ho-ly Ghost shall rest;
2. So full of grace, so full of faith, She wav-er'd not at what he said;
3. There-fore let us, from shore to shore, Pro-claim He bles-sed ev-er more;
In whom, to save man-kind from Hell, The ev-er-last-ing God should dwell.
"Be-hold the hand maid of the Lord Be it ac-cord-ing to Thy word."
The stem of Jes-se's prom-ised rod, The Moth-er of her Lord and God.

Gabriel's Message

XIIIth Century Carol
Angelus emittur
Trans. by J. M. NEALE

Ancient melody from
Piæ Cantiones in Hypo-Dorian Mode
Harmonized by A. VINCENT BENNETT


1. Ga-briel's mess-age does a-way Sa-tan's curse and ev-il sway; This was
2. Weak-ness shall the strong con-found; By the hands in babe-clothes wound, Ad-am's

wrought by Christ - mas Day; There - fore sing, 'Glo - ry to the in - fant King.'
chains shall be un - bound; There - fore sing, 'Glo - ry to the in - fant King.'

Gloria in Excelsis

Old Scottish Chant

Glory be to God on high: and on earth peace, good will towards men.

Shepherds in Field

NAHUM TATE

Old English Folk Song
Harmonized by A. VINCENT BENNETT

1. While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night, All seat-ed on the ground, The an-gel of the Lord came down, And glo-ry shone a - round.
2. "Fear not", said he, for mighty dread Had seized their troubled mind, Glad tid-ings of great joy I bring To you and all man-kind.
3. "To you", in Da-vid's town this day, Is born of David's line, The Saviour, who is Christ the Lord; And this shall be the sign.
4. "Th' heav'nly Babe you there shall find To human view displayed All meanly wrapped in swathing bands, And in a manger laid."
5. Thus spake the Seraph, and forthwith Ap-peared a shin-ing throng Of An-gels prais-ing God, who thus Addressed their joy-ful song.
6. "All glo-ry be to God on high, And to the earth be peace; Good-will henceforth from heav'n to men, Be-gin and nev-er cease.

A Star is Moving Thro' the Sky

Ancient Carol

J. S. BACH

1. A star is mov - ing thro' the sky Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya,
2. They know by this that heav'n's great King, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya,
3. Thus came they un - to Beth - le - hem, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya,
4. Gold, in - cense, myrrh, to Him they bear, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya,
5. Thus should we al - so, all our days, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya,

Be - fore the wise - men won - drous - ly, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya.
Good news to them on earth doth bring, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya.
Thy lamp, O, Lord, is light - ing, them, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya.
And psalms, and hymns, and songs pre - pare, Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya.
To Je - sus of - fer ho - ly praise Al - le - lu - ya, Al - le - lu - ya.

A JUNIOR PROGRAM OF WORSHIP[1]

By Edna Crandall

The author has herself used these programs with good results with a Junior-Intermediate group, in a church building, the space arrangement of which did not permit the separation of these groups for the opening service of worship

Theme for the Month—GLAD TIDINGS

First Sunday: Glory to God in the Highest.
Second Sunday: Peace on Earth—Good Will to Men.
Third Sunday: The Guiding Star.
Fourth Sunday: God's Gift to Us (Christmas).
Fifth Sunday: The World for Christ (Missionary).

First Sunday

Theme: Glory to God in the highest

Piano Prelude

Call to Worship

I will praise the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together.

Response

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of thee,
Heaven and earth are praising thee,
O Lord most high. Amen.
(Found in any hymnal.)

Hymn: *Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come.*

Scripture: My soul doth magnify the Lord (Luke 1 46-53).

Prayer

O thou who leadest us to Christ, we thank thee for the Christmas season. We thank thee for all the glad rejoicing that the Master has brought to the world. At his gracious touch dead hopes arise, sorrows flee away, and those that sit in the darkness of selfishness see the great light of God's holy love. Nations are coming to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising, O thou Friend of man. For in the face of Jesus have they seen the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. May the spirit of cheer and hope and unselfish devotion possess the hearts of all thy children. And may all that we ourselves do as we travel over the days to Christmas . . . be done in the spirit of our Master, Jesus Christ. Amen. (From *A Manual for Training in Worship,* by Hugh Hartshorne. Used by permission of the publishers. Copyright, 1915, by Charles Scribner's Sons.)

Prayer Response

Father in heaven, hear us today;
Hallowed thy name be; hear us, we pray!
O let thy kingdom come, O let thy will be done,
By all beneath the sun, as in the skies. Amen.
(*Hymnal for American Youth.*)

Offertory Service

Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase.
(Offertory—Music)

Response (Sung)

All things come of thee, O Lord,
And of thine own have we given thee. Amen.
(For music see THE CHURCH SCHOOL, October, 1923.)

Hymn: *O Come, All Ye Faithful.*

Recessional

Second Sunday

Theme: Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men

Piano Prelude

Call to Worship

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
Peace, good will to men.

Response (Sung)

O sing a song of Bethlehem,
Of shepherds watching there,
And of the news that came to them
From angels in the air:
The light that shone on Bethlehem
Fills all the world today;
Of Jesus' birth and peace on earth
The angels sing alway. Amen.
(*Worship and Song Hymnal.*)

Hymn: *Hark, What Mean Those Holy Voices?*

Scripture: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. Luke 1 (68-75).

Prayer

Eternal Spirit of good will, grant us thy spirit, and may thy will be done in us and everywhere. Give us grace to be patient, kind, and just toward those who misunderstand us or who miss the way of Christ. Keep our hearts warm with affection, with the spirit of forgiveness and brotherly cooperation, and with zeal to promote good will among men. We voice our prayer in the spirit of the gentle yet heroic Christ. Amen.
(*Worship and Song Hymnal,* Pilgrim Press.)

Prayer Hymn: (Tune—*Canonbury*)

O God, thy world is sweet with prayer;
The breath of Christ is in the air;
We rise on thy free Spirit's wings,
And every thought within us sings.

O God, within us and above,
Close to us in the Christ we love,
Through him, our only guide and way,
May heavenly life be ours today. Amen.
(*Worship and Song.*)

Offertory Service

Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them.
(Offertory—Music)

Response (Sung)

Of thine own we offer,
Of thy gifts we give
Unto thee, O Father,
In whose life all live. Amen.
(*Worship and Song.*)

Hymn: *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing.*

Recessional

[1]Copyright, 1923, by Edna Crandall.

Third Sunday

Theme: The Guiding Star

Piano Prelude

Opening (Unison)

O little town, O little town,
Upon the hills so far,
We see you like a thing sublime,
Across the great gray wastes of time,
And men go up and men go down,
But follow still the star.

(*Clinton Scollard.*)

Response (Sung)

O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light. Amen.

(Any hymnal.)

Hymn: *Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning.*

Scripture: The Visit of the Wise-men. Matthew 2 (1-12).

Story: *The Other Wise Man.* (Adapted) Henry van Dyke.

Prayer

O God, our Father, we thank thee for the joy that came into the world when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. We thank thee that light sprang up then for those that sat in darkness, and that this light and joy are in our homes today because of him. Let us not crowd him out of our lives because there is no room for him there, but may we welcome him as the Christmas gift of God's love, so that he may always stay with us and make our lives what God would have them be. We come to thee with sorrow for the children today who are cold and sick and starving and helpless. Send them deliverance and cheer, we pray thee. May the peace and good will that Jesus came to bring, spring up among the nations everywhere. And may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

(Henry Kingman in THE CHURCH SCHOOL for December, 1921.)

Prayer Hymn

O Child of lowly manger birth,
On whose low cry the ages wait,
Lead us thy way and every day
Guide us to see what made thee great. Amen.

(*Hymnal for American Youth.*)

Offertory Service

Every good and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.

Freely ye received, freely give.

(Offertory—Music)

Response

We give thee but thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be.
All that we have is thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from thee.

May we thy bounties thus
As stewards true receive,
And gladly as thou blesseth us,
To thee our first fruits give. Amen.

(*Methodist Hymnal.*)

Hymn: *As with Gladness Men of Old.*

Recessional

Fourth Sunday

Theme—God's Gift to us (Christmas)

Piano Prelude: *Silent Night*

Opening Sentence

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Song: *The Birthday of a King* (Neidlinger).

Scripture: *The Angel's Song.* Luke 2 (8-14).

Prayer

Father in heaven, whose mercy we praise in the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; grant that as we welcome our Redeemer, his presence may shed abroad, in our hearts and in our homes, the light of heavenly peace and joy. . . . And help us so to celebrate this day, in humility and gratitude, in unselfish love and cheerful service, that our keeping of Christmas may be a blessing to our souls, a memorial of Christ, a benefit to our fellow men, and a thanksgiving unto thee for thine unspeakable gift of the Saviour. Amen.

(*Service and Prayers for Church and Home,* by Bishop Wilbur P. Thirkield. Copyright, 1918.) 1918.)

Prayer Hymn

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels

Church Showing Simple, Effective Christmas Decoration

The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel! Amen.
(*O Little Town of Bethlehem,* by Phillips Brooks.)

Offertory Service

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?

I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows unto the Lord, yea, in the presence of all his people.

(Offertory—Music)

Response

Bless thou the gifts our hands have brought,
Bless thou the work our hearts have planned,
Ours is the faith, the will, the thought,
The rest, O God, is in thy hand. Amen.
(*A Book of Worship,* by Hugh Hartshorne. Copyright, 1915, by Charles Scribner's Sons. Used by permission.)

Hymn: *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.*

Recessional

Fifth Sunday

Theme: The World for Christ (Missionary)

Piano Prelude

Call to Worship

Let the peoples praise thee, O God; let all the peoples praise thee.

Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for thou wilt judge the peoples with equity, and govern the nations upon earth.

Response (Tune—*Old Hundred*)

In every land begin the song;
To every land the strains belong.
In cheerful sounds all voices raise,
And fill the world with loudest praise. Amen.
(Isaac Watts.)

Scripture: The reign of the righteous king. Psalm 72 (1-19).

Hymn: *Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun.*

Prayer for Missions

Almighty God, who, by thy Son Jesus Christ, didst give commandment to the holy apostles that they should go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, grant to us whom thou hast called into thy church a ready will to obey thy word, and fill us with a hearty desire to make thy way known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Look with compassion upon the heathen that have not known thee, and on the multitudes in our own land that are scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. O heavenly Father, Lord of the harvest, have respect, we beseech thee, to our prayers, and send forth laborers into thine harvest. Fit and prepare them by thy grace for the work of thy ministry; give them the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind; strengthen them to endure hardness, and grant that both by their life and doctrine they may show forth thy glory, and set forward the salvation of all men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
(*Service and Prayers for Church and Home,* Thirkield. Copyright, 1918.)

Prayer Hymn

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise;

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of thy love;
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for thee.
—*Frances R. Havergal.*

Offertory Service

O Master, as thou didst take the loaves and by thy love and power make them to feed the famished multitude, so take our gifts today and bring them, through thy power and love, to feed the hungry souls of men. Amen.
Adapted from *Service and Prayers,* Bishop Wilbur P. Thirkield. Copyright, 1918.)

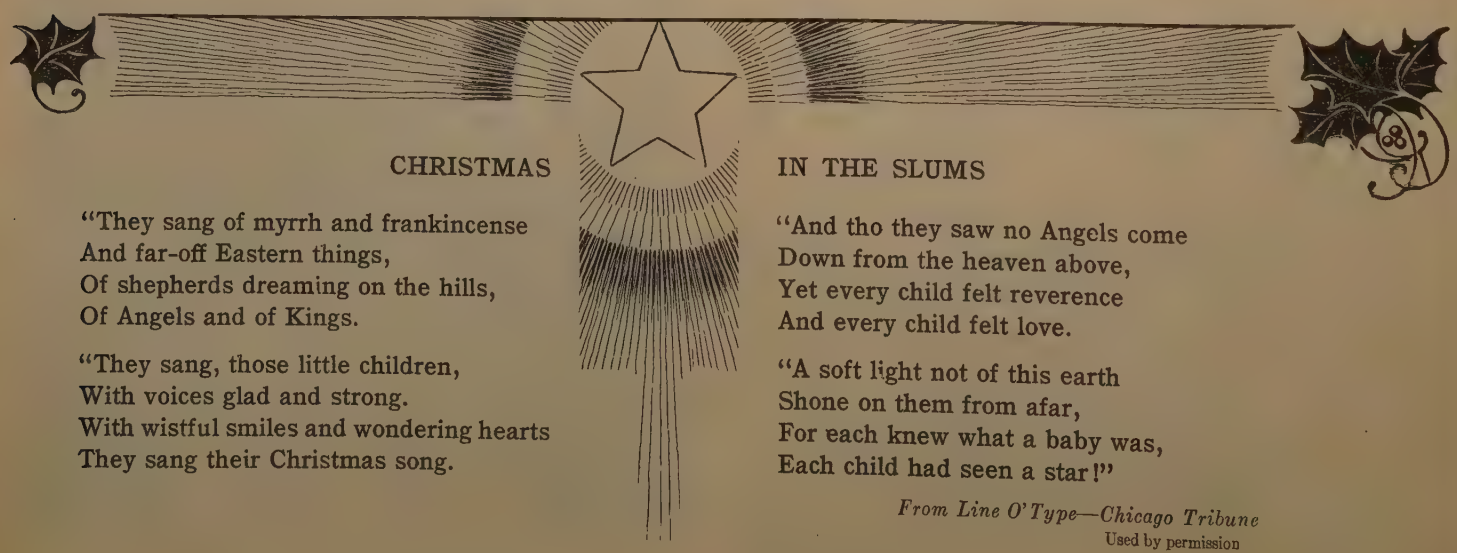
(Offertory—Music)

Response

Of thine own we offer,
Of thy gifts we give,
Unto thee, O Father,
In whose life all live. Amen.
—*Worship and Song.*

Hymn: *Christ for the World We Sing.*

Recessional



CHRISTMAS

"They sang of myrrh and frankincense
And far-off Eastern things,
Of shepherds dreaming on the hills,
Of Angels and of Kings.

"They sang, those little children,
With voices glad and strong.
With wistful smiles and wondering hearts
They sang their Christmas song.

IN THE SLUMS

"And tho they saw no Angels come
Down from the heaven above,
Yet every child felt reverence
And every child felt love.

"A soft light not of this earth
Shone on them from afar,
For each knew what a baby was,
Each child had seen a star!"

From Line O'Type—Chicago Tribune
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Artist, Couse.
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The Adoration of the Shepherds

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT OF THE HOLY GRAIL[1]

By W. Russell Bowie

The Characters

KING Arthur
Two Angels
Mary
Joseph
Two Shepherds
The Three Magi: Melchior, Gaspar, Balthasar
Page
Knights:
Sir Launcelot
Sir Bedivere
Sir Gareth
Sir Tristram
Sir Percival
Sir Modred
Galahad
Three Damsels
One Maiden

Scene One

Reader:

Long ago in Britain lived King Arthur, and round him in his high castle of Camelot gathered the knights whom he had chosen. It is of Arthur and of his knights, and especially of Launcelot and Galahad, that you shall hear today. And you shall hear of Arthur's dream, and of his great desire. At Christmas time he dreamed, and in his dream he saw a vision of the Christ-child, and of all those who came to Bethlehem to bring him gifts; and then was born the king's desire to win for Christ the gift which only the perfect knight at last should bring. Watch, therefore, and consider, and understand. (*Enter, slowly and thoughtfully, King Arthur.*)

Into the hall of the castle at Camelot came King Arthur, in the long, late silence of a Christmas Eve. He moved slowly as one whose thoughts were far away. Somewhere in the castle a bell chimed the hour of midnight (*gong strikes twelve*), and dimly through far corridors came the sound of voices (*choir sings*) singing very softly to herald the Christmas day. (*Stops before altar, and takes service book, opens, and very slowly, reading as he walks, approaches large chair, at congregation's left, and sits down.*) From an altar of the chapel, which opened from the great hall, the king took the service book, with reverent hands. He turned the pages until he came to the story of Christmas, blazoned there in color and gold. He moved with slow steps across the hall, reading as he went; sat down, and followed the story to its end. Motionless he lingered there, pondering with quiet eyes. (*Pantomime follows story.*) Then very gradually he closed the book; he laid it down upon the floor beside him; his head dropped forward on his hand. He slept and dreamed.

(*Organ begins—"Angels from the Realms of Glory."*)

(*Two angels appear from Door B, carrying a screen of soft veiling stuff.*)

In a vision he beheld two angels pass before him, and a veil hid what was behind them. (*Tableau as suggested by story.*) Then the veil was lifted, and he saw the maiden mother in the stable at Bethlehem, bending over the Christ-child at her breast, while Joseph kept watch at her side. (*Enter shepherds, and follow action of story.*) With timid step and wondering gaze, two shepherds drew near, and knelt before the mother and the Child, laying rude gifts before them on the ground. (*Organ dies away.*) For a while they knelt in adoration, while the air was filled with heavenly singing. Then they rose, and very reverently went on their way. (*Exeunt shepherds.*)

Still on his throne the king sat motionless, while the vision unfolded before his dreaming eyes. Toward the presence of the mother and Child, three other figures were drawing near. From the distance they came, and the sound of their voices went before them. (*Quartet behind the door at R. sings two verses of "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning."*) Very softly they sang together of a quest on which their feet were set. (*Magi enter at R.*) They were Magi from the East, from the far lands where for centuries men had watched the stars and read in them the message of the thoughts of God. They wore the garments and they walked with the mien of kings. (*Magi approach the Child and stand still in awe.*) Yet they, too, like the humble shepherds, paused in awe before the mother and the Child. One by one they knelt and offered the gifts which they were bearing in their hands.

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The Oath of Knighthood

(*Melchior comes forward, kneels, and offers his gift.*)

"O little child," said Melchior the leader of the Magi, "I bring thee gold as symbol of thy kingship. Yet thou art King in nobler way than any crown of gold can show." (*Melchior arises, and goes left.*)

(*Gaspar comes forward, kneels and offers his gift.*)

Said Gaspar, the second of the Magi, as he knelt, "I bring thee myrrh and frankincense, O thou who by thy sorrows shall be King of all the bruised hearts of men." (*Arises and goes left.*)

(*Balthasar holds cup high, advances, and kneels. An angel takes it from him, as both come forward.*)

Balthasar, the last of the Magi, held in his hands a jeweled cup. As he knelt to offer it, one of the angels stooped and took it from his hands. She held it high. (*Organ begins Parsifal music.*)

(*Angel holds the cup high. Melchior and Gaspar again kneel where they are.*)

"Behold!" the angels said to one another, "from this cup the lips of the Christ-child, grown to be a man, shall drink. From this cup he shall share the wine with his disciples in an upper room that waits beneath the shadow of a cross. And this cup, filled with the wine of his last sacrifice, shall be the Holy Grail. Through all the earth men shall seek for it, and follow on to find it. But none shall ever see it save those who are fit to stand in the Presence of Christ."

(*Exeunt Magi.*)

Slowly the Magi rose and went on their way.

(*Follow action of story.*)

On his throne King Arthur stirred. He drew one hand across his brow. It was as though the dream were passing from him, and he must seize it before it went away.

(*Slowly comes toward congregation, one hand upon his breast, the other lifted; his eyes still gazing away.*)

He rose, and with slow steps went forward.

"I have seen the shepherds and the Magi bring their gifts into the presence of the Christ," he said. "Out of my kingdom I would bring a gift that will find favor in his eyes. How may it come to pass that even in our later years we still at Christmas time may stand in the presence of the Christ?"

(*Angels draw curtain before the Holy Family tableau. One angel takes a step toward Arthur.*)

Then very gently the angels looked at him, but between him and the Holy Ones they drew the veil. Mary and Joseph and the Child Jesus vanished. Then one of the angels spoke.

(*Arthur turns and bows his head, his hands crossed on his breast.*)

"In your dream you have beheld what mortal eyes can seldom see. You have asked that from your kingdom there may come a gift which shall make him who brings it worthy to stand in the presence of Christ. Go seek then for the noblest gift which life can bring. When you have found the perfect gift, then shall you see again the Holy Grail. Till then it vanishes, and the Christmas music sounds no more."

(*Follow action of story.*)

Slowly the angels passed from sight.

In the midst of the hall King Arthur stood with eyes from which his dreaming lifted like a mist. He raised his head, and a shiver of waking passed through his frame. He flung out his arms and cried aloud: (*Hold tableau of outflung arms, facing congregation, throughout speech.*)

"What I this night have seen, as in a vision, help me, O Lord, with unveiled eyes to see again. Teach me to find the perfect gift for Christ. And when that gift is found, let the token be that we shall see in our midst again the cup of the Holy Grail."

For a moment he knelt before the altar. (*Follow action of story.*) Then presently he rose and went his way.

(*In interval between Scenes I and II, Choir sings hymn, "We Three Kings of Orient Are."*)

Scene Two

(*Seats are arranged in shallow semicircle, facing the congregation.*)

Reader:

In the hall at Camelot, the seats of Arthur's knights were ranged. Among them was the throne of the king himself, but beside it there was a still nobler seat. No knight sat there. It was called the Siege Perilous, and only the perfect knight might dare to claim it for his own. Many a brave and goodly knight belonged to Arthur's court, but never a one who dared to say his knighthood had no fault. For long, long time the Siege Perilous had stood unoccupied, and many began to think that it should stand thus till Camelot itself should be no more. The perfect knight did not exist, they said. The Siege Perilous was only the symbol of an empty hope. (*Launcelot and page enter at B.*)

Into the hall came Launcelot and a page. The greatest of the knights of Arthur led the boy gently by the hand. (*Rests arm about page's shoulders.*)

"Little lad," he said, "you are ever about the king. Why is his heart so sad?" (*Follow action of story.*)

The boy pointed to the Siege Perilous.

"I think he grieves," he said, "that still that seat is vacant." (*Launcelot, too, looks at seat.*)

"Yea, that is an old regret," said Launcelot, "but is that all?"

(*The page, if desired, may pantomime each of the characters.*)

"Not all," the boy replied, "yet all is linked with that. The king is troubled at a dream he had on Christmas Eve. He seemed to see the Christ-child, and the shepherds, and the Wise-men bringing gifts. He saw an angel also who held the Holy Grail. And he heard in his dream that he should never see the Holy Grail again, nor hear the heavenly Christmas music till out of his kingdom there should come a gift that should be fit for Christ. He hoped that one of his knights might somehow bring it, and that such a knight might fill the empty seat."

"It may be as you say," said Launcelot (*Arthur enters at B.*), but look where Arthur comes!" (*Exit page.*)

The king appeared in the doorway, and advanced into the hall, while the boy went out. (*Follow action of story.*) He stretched out his hands toward Launcelot, and Launcelot knelt and kissed his hands.

"Kneel not," said Arthur. (*Gestures to Launcelot to stand.*) "Rise, for I would counsel with thee. A great desire stirs me, till it be fulfilled. Ere another Christmas, we must learn the secret that shall bring again the Holy Grail. Out of the kingdom we must find a gift for Christ so great that we shall win His Presence here."

"Then bid us go," said Launcelot (*Launcelot stands, and faces king earnestly*), "on that quest. Through all the borders of the kingdom send the knights of Camelot. Perchance some one of us may win the gift that can bring back the Grail."

"So let it be," said Arthur. "Go, call the page." (*Arthur gestures toward door, and slowly walks over to his chair. Follow action of story.*)

Launcelot went to the door and came back in a moment with the boy.

"Summon the knights to come to me," said Arthur.

The lad went out and came back presently with a trumpet. (*Page returns. Remains standing right. Follow action of story.*)

Arthur took his seat upon his throne, and bade Launcelot seat himself upon his left. On his right was the Siege Perilous.

"Sir Bedivere!" the page proclaimed, (*organ sounds trumpet notes*) and set the trumpet to his lips and blew to herald him.

(*Enter each of the knights as called. All bow before the king as they enter.*)

Sir Bedivere made his obeisance to the king and took the seat by Launcelot.

Then, one by one, came others, while the trumpet heralded their approach.

"Sir Gareth!"

"Sir Tristram!"

"Sir Percival!"

"Sir Modred!"

(*Organ begins music of "O Little Town of Bethlehem."*)

When they were assembled, Arthur spoke. (*All are settled, and listen carefully to the king.*) "Last Christmas Eve," he said, "I saw a vision. I beheld the Christ-child and those who came to bring him gifts. I saw an angel with the Holy Grail. But the Holy Grail shall come no more to Camelot till some great gift of glory shall be brought to Christ. Today I send you forth on quest to try what you may win." (*Organ ceases. All stand but Modred, who remains gloomily on his seat.*)

Then up rose all but Modred.

"We shall go," they said. "Give us again thine accolade ere we depart." (*One by one they kneel before the king, who touches each with his sword.*)

One by one they knelt before the king—Sir Bedivere, Sir Percival, Sir Gareth and Sir Tristram—and he touched them with his sword; one by one they went with strong, swift stride away. (*Exit each as soon as the king has touched him. Only Launcelot and Modred remain.*)

Only Launcelot and Modred were left with Arthur. (*Organ begins ominous music. Modred turns to king.*)

Then slowly Modred spoke.

"I beg you send me forth on no such quest. I cannot chase the fancies of a dream," (*slowly arises and leaves the room*), and sullenly he passed from out the hall. (*Launcelot watches Modred angrily.*)

Organ changes to Parsifal theme.

But Launcelot rose, with high, stern face. (*He takes a step after Modred, but stops and faces king eagerly.*)

"We shall not fail," he said. "When Christmas Eve has come again, we shall return to bring thee, by God's grace, thy heart's desire."

He, too, knelt down before the king, and rose and went away. (*Follow action of story.*)

For a moment Arthur sat still upon his throne. Then he went and stood, with lifted face, before the altar, musing within himself.

(*Organ changes to music of "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning."*)

"They go," he said, "as the Magi went of old, upon a distant quest. They follow their gleam, as the Magi followed their star. God grant that they, too, shall find the Presence of Christ at the end of the way." (*Arthur goes out.*)

In interval between Scenes II and III, Choir sings verses 1, 2, and 7 of hymn, *Immortal Love.*

Immortal Love, forever full,
Forever flowing free,
Forever shared, forever whole,
A never ebbing sea!

Our outward lips confess the Name
All other names above;
Love only knoweth whence it came,
And comprehendeth love.

O Lord, and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine.

Tune—*Serenity.*

Scene Three

Reader:

The months went by, and through all the realm the knights of Arthur, on wide ways of adventuring, sought to win for the king that which might be the gift of his heart's desire. On far and perilous ways they rode. Through many a struggle with the hosts of evil, they carved their path. And now as the time drew on toward another Christmas, they turned their faces back to Camelot. (*Launcelot enters at B.*)

Into the great hall of the castle came Launcelot, the knightliest of them all. In his steps was weariness, but from his eyes there shone the light of one who carried in his heart the secret of a mighty hope. (*Enter Galahad.*) After him there came another figure that had not been seen in Camelot before. Younger than Launcelot was this new knight. He wore no armor, and his head was bare. Round his slender, yet stalwart form a scarlet cloak was girded. (*Follow action of story.*) He followed Launcelot into the hall, and stood there silently before the mightier knight.

"Here" (*with sweeping gesture Launcelot encircles room, as Galahad follows it*), said Launcelot, "is the hall of Arthur. Here in this hall the knights of the king are wont to gather at the Table Round. (*Points at altar.*) Yonder at the altar, one by one, they have sworn their fealty to the king, and kept the vigil of their prayer to God for grace and courage, as becomes a knight. (*Places both hands on Galahad's shoulders.*) And you, who shall be known henceforth as Galahad, I bring you here that you may keep your vigil. (*Organ begins ominous music.*) The times are evil, and we come in needful hour. (*Launcelot walks restlessly, back and forth, stopping occasionally before Galahad to emphasize what he is saying.*) Since Christmas Day, a twelve-month since, when I, and Percival, and Bedivere, and others who have loved the king, went forth on quest, bitterness and malice have lifted their heads within the palace. Modred, the false knight, has sought to break the spirit of the fellowship. He laughs at what he calls the dream of Arthur. It is even said that he would set revolt on foot if he but dared. Still he is here within the palace, like a serpent, venomous and secret. Always he has hated me. The very thought of Launcelot is madness to his brain. When he shall hear that I have brought you, he will do you evil if he may. Beware of Modred. Arm yourself against him; but arm you first with panoply of God. (*Brings Galahad to altar.*) Tonight I leave you here before the altar, to keep the maiden vigil of a knight." (*Organ changes to a sweeter theme.*)

Then Launcelot went away, and Galahad was left alone. (*Follow action of story.*)

He knelt before the altar, and stretched forth his hands to pray. He folded them upon his breast, and bowed his head in silent adoration. (*Organ reverts to ominous music.*)

(*Modred enters from R. Follow action of story.*)

Then very slowly from the far end of the hall, with steps that kept a stealthy quiet on the floor, came a knight with black cloak wrapped about his face. He stopped and stared at Galahad, kneeling, all unconscious of his presence. (*Modred steps out swiftly.*) Then, as noiselessly as he had come, but swiftly, he vanished.

(*Enter R. Modred with page. Follow action of story.*)

Presently he came again, leading a page. He gripped the boy evilly by the hand. He pointed to Galahad and whispered a question to the page.

"Who is this newcomer to the Court of Arthur?" he demanded. (*The boy's wrist is still held in Modred's grasp.*)

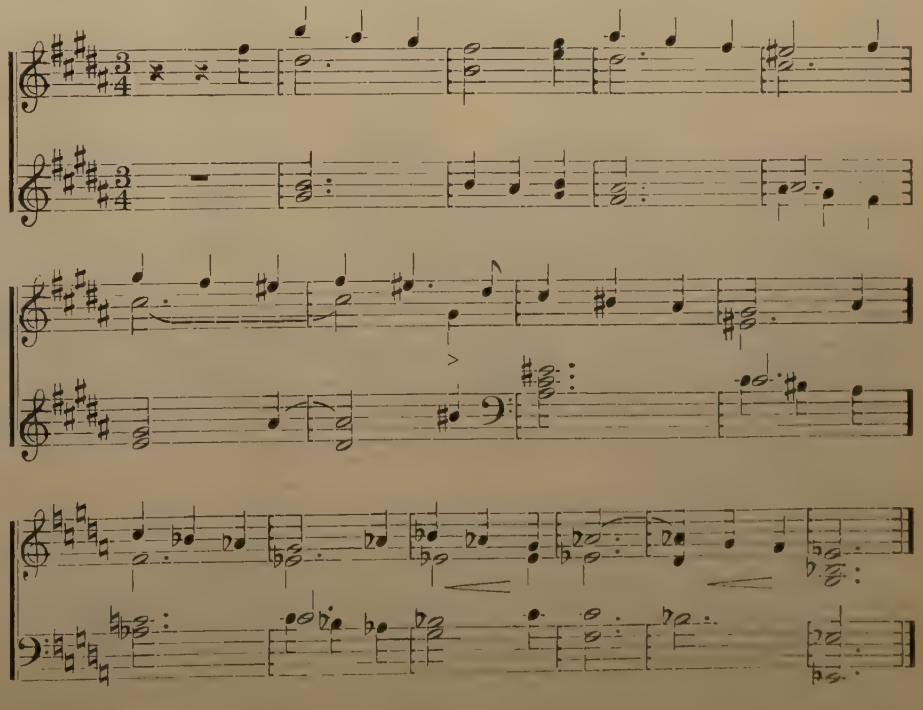
Frightened, the boy made answer to him. "That is Galahad, whom Launcelot has brought. For Launcelot says that this shall be the perfect knight who comes to bring the king the gift of his heart's desire."

Through the form of Modred a sudden shiver of anger ran. (*Gestures hastily for page to go.*)

"Begone!" he whispered to the boy. "Nor ever say thou sawest me here, or else thy life shall answer for it."

Still before the altar, rapt in his devo-

Theme from "Parsifal"



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The Departure

tion (*follow action of story*), Galahad knelt, unconscious still of what went on behind him.

Modred drew his sword.

"Here shall I end," he said, "the hopes of Launcelot." (*Follow action of story.*)

He drew closer to Galahad, the sword shortened in his hand.

Slowly the shoulders of Galahad straightened. He had not heard Modred, nor knew that he was near. His lips were moving in the intensity of prayer. He stretched out his arms, and, as he did so, they made the sign of the cross.

Modred saw it, and a dark fear fell upon him. (*Organ music ends in a sort of shiver of discord.*)

"It is the sign of God!" he said. "I dare not strike him." (*Modred draws backward; then slowly goes to exit, his eyes on Galahad as he speaks.*) He recoiled a step, and his eyes roved here and there. Then a new thought seemed to strike him. His face revealed an evil joy.

"It is not needful that I strike him: I shall destroy him in a subtler way. I will tempt him to his fall." (*Follow action of story.*)

He went out, and Galahad bowed again in the silence of the shrine. (*Enter from R. Modred and three damsels.*)

After a time, came Modred again, and three damsels with him. They were richly clothed, and very fair. In the far corner of the hall, in shadow, where Galahad could not see, Modred waited. (*Follow action of story.*) The three damsels went forward softly toward the kneeling figure. They stood beside him till he knew that they were there.

Reluctantly he rose and faced them. (*One approaches Galahad.*)

"Sir Knight," said one of them, "on Christmas Day you come with Launcelot to appear before the king. It is not well that one should appear before him empty-handed. If you would be great in Camelot, you must come with marks of greatness which the eyes of all can see. Behold, I give you wealth."

She held out to him a golden casket, but Galahad stood still. (*The second comes nearer Galahad.*)

"And I bring you," said the second damsel, "this plume to glorify your helmet. It is the plume of fame." (*The third comes nearer to Galahad.*)

"And I," said the third, "would clothe you with this jeweled robe of pride." (*Surround him, holding out their gifts.*)

They came nearer with their rich gifts in their hands. But Galahad drew back, and looked at them. (*Galahad shakes his head.*) Slowly he shook his head.

"These gifts," he said, "are not for me. Not thus apparelled must I come into the presence of the king." (*Follow action of story.*)

The damsels stood irresolute. Then they withdrew to where Modred, scowling, met them, and all together they passed from the hall. (*Organ begins gentle music. Galahad stands facing altar. Enter fourth maiden. As she speaks, Galahad turns about and faces her.*)

But Galahad was not left alone. For ere the damsels had retreated, another figure had come into the hall. She had watched them wonderingly as they retreated, and had seen the evil face of Modred meet them. Silently she came forward and stood near Galahad. (*Parsifal Music.*)

"Sir Knight," she said, "with wisdom have you refused the gifts but now held out to you. Not wealth, nor fame, nor pride will make you ready to satisfy the heart's desire of the king. One thing alone is needful, and that none other than yourself can give. Therefore, I bring you not a gift, but only the token of what you yourself must offer. Upon your robe I put the cross of consecration. Wear it as a symbol of the knightliness you bring." (*Follow action of story.*)

In her hand she held a cross, cut from white cloth of samite. She fastened it upon the red robe of Galahad.

He stood before her, looking far away. (*Follow action of story.*)

Quietly she went away while Galahad still was motionless. Then he, too, passed through the doorway of the hall. (*Choir sings hymn "Silent night, holy night," while preparation is being made for Scene IV.*)

Scene Four

(*Seats arranged as in Scene II.*)

Reader:

The night of Christmas Eve drew on toward the morning of another Christmas. (*Enter page at B. Follow action of story.*) The day was breaking, as into the hall at Camelot came the little page. He sat down at the foot of Arthur's throne. His head drooped, and presently he fell asleep. (*Arthur enters at B. Follow action of story.*)

From the door came Arthur. He saw the boy and smiled. Quietly he seated himself upon the throne, and looked down upon the sleeping figure. He laid his hand tenderly upon the boy's hair. (*Holds tableau throughout speech.*)

"Today, little lad," he said in a low voice that did not wake the child, "today we may behold a marvelous thing. Perhaps the gift shall be brought that shall call back the Holy Grail. (*Looks upward.*) If it comes we shall hear again the heavenly music. If there is only silence, we shall know that the gift has not been found. Today, this Christmas morn, my knights come back. Look, how through the eastern windows comes the sun. (*Gently shakes the boy.*) Wake, little lad!" (*Choir sings one verse of "O'er the Distant Mountains Breaking."*)

O'er the distant mountains breaking
Comes the reddening dawn of day;
Rise, my soul, from sleep awakening,
Rise, and sing, and watch, and pray;
'Tis thy Saviour, 'tis thy Saviour,
On his bright returning way.

Tune—*Dulce Carmen or Regent Square.*

The boy, startled from his sleep, looked up, frightened, at the king. (*Follow action of story.*)

"Be not afraid," said Arthur. (*Gestures to boy to go.*) "Go, look from the tower and see whether the knights ride home." (*Exit page for a moment and returns.*)

The boy went out, and in a little while he came again.

"They come," he said. "Even now the first of them has passed the gate." (*Arthur looks toward door.*)

Eagerly King Arthur waited. (*Bedivere enters at B.*)

Through the doorway presently came Sir Bedivere. He bore in his hand a cluster of great keys. (*Bows before king. Then stands and holds forward the keys.*)

"God make thee glad this day, King Arthur!" he exclaimed. "For I have brought these keys of far-off castles I have won for thee, to do with as thou wilt."

"Welcome, Sir Bedivere," said Arthur. "And well I know the prowess thou hast shown. Lay down thy gift before the

altar." *Bedivere kneels before the altar and lays down his gift, then comes slowly to his seat.*)

Sir Bedivere laid down the keys; and there was silence.

He took his seat with disappointed face. (*Enter Sir Tristram. Same action as before.*)

In came Sir Tristram. In his hand he carried a cluster of lances.

"These, O King," he said, "are the weapons of thine enemies whom I have overthrown."

And the king answered, "Valiant is thy spirit, Tristram. Lay down thy gift before the shrine of God." (*Follow action of story.*)

Tristram laid down the lances. But again the hall was silent, nor came there any heavenly sign.

Tristram took his seat. (*Enter Sir Gareth.*)

Next came Sir Gareth. He carried in his hand a flag. (*Same action as before.*)

"This flag," he said, "is symbol of kingship over spacious realms. There, by my conquest, thou mayest reign."

"Thy valor, too, is noble," Arthur said. "Lay down the banner in the sight of God." (*Follow action of story.*)

Gareth placed it by the lances and the keys. But no sound broke the silence of the hall, nor came there any shining of the Grail.

Gareth took his seat. (*Enter Percival.*)

Next after him came Percival. He brought a gleaming sword. (*Same action as before.*)

"My Lord, the king," he said, "I took this sword from a far island in enchanted seas. Who carries it shall triumph everywhere. Take this, and all the earth is thine—yea, thine to give to God." (*Follow action of story.*)

Arthur's eyes brightened. He rose from his throne. "Lay it before the altar," he said. "Let us see whether the Grail will come."

Percival laid down the sword. Then waited they all, and watched, and listened, but there came no sight nor sound.

Arthur sat down wearily upon his throne.

"Only Launcelot left," he said. (*Enter Launcelot.*)

Then last came Launcelot.

"O best beloved of all the knights of Camelot," said Arthur, "What hast thou brought?" (*Follow action of story.*)

"I come," said Launcelot, "with empty hands. For no gifts we ourselves have wrought or won can gain for thee the Holy Grail. The dust of earthiness, the scars of sin, are on us all. One gift alone can bring the Holy Grail. It is the gift of a new manhood in our fellowship. It is the presence of a nobler knighthood, white, unstained, and true." (*Follow action of story.*)

Back to the door he went, and came again, leading Galahad. (*Organ begins Parsifal music.*)

"Lo, here," he said, "is the virgin valor of the pure in heart. Here is the gift of the soul of man made fair for Christ."

Through the great spaces of the hall, there woke the sound of music. Sweet and faint and far away it seemed at first, and then it rose and surged into tumultuous splendor, like an ocean, throbbing upon an echoing shore. (*Enter angels holding high the Holy Grail. Follow action of story.*) Then suddenly the hall was bright with an unearthly radiance, for into the presence of Arthur two angels came, and in their hands they bore the Holy Grail.

Before their seats the knights leaped to their feet, and stood still and awestruck. Galahad fell upon his knees.

But the angels went and stood one on either side of the Siege Perilous, and over it they held the Grail. (*Follow action of story.*)

Launcelot went forward slowly and touched Galahad upon the shoulder. He bade him rise. Then, very reverently, he led him toward the Siege Perilous, and seated him there. (*Hold tableau.*)

The angels spoke, one to another.

"From the Siege Perilous," they said, "the life that brings its gift to God must go on ways of mighty service. Out on the road of human need it must adventure, offering there to the least of these, His brethren, the beauty of the gift it brings to Christ." (*Follow action of story.*)

On either side of the Siege Perilous they remained for a moment, lifting up the Holy Grail. Then, with the Grail held high between them (*exeunt down center aisle of church according to reading*), they passed from Camelot. From the Siege Perilous Galahad rose and followed them, and, after him, at a little distance, went Launcelot and the other knights of Arthur. The king himself stood motionless before his throne; and as he stood and listened, there floated back the voice of Galahad as he sang—

"My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure.

"So pass I forth through hovering wings,
By bridge and ford, by hill and vale,
All armed I ride, whate'er betide,
I follow still the Holy Grail."

(*After the angels, Galahad, Launcelot, and the other knights have passed down the middle aisle, when the song of Galahad—sung outside by a voice from the choir—has ended, Arthur turns and with the page goes out through the chancel door. Then the choir and all the congregation rise and sing hymn.*)

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on His cradle the dew-drops are shining,
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

Shall we not yield him in costly devotion,
Odors of Edom, and offerings divine,
Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mine?

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The Siege Perilous

Galahad is about to take his place at the great Round Table with King Arthur and his knights. Sword-hilts, lifted high on every side, give the sign of the cross and portend the conflicts that are to be waged in its sacred cause. King Arthur rises from his seat to receive the new knight and leader. Galahad advances with involuntary movement as though in the hands of destiny, all sense of self lost in the greatness of the moment.

JAPANESE GIRLS AND RELIGIOUS PAGEANTRY

The Story of Christmas in a Mission School in Japan

By Elizabeth M. Lee

THREE years ago, at the time of the World's Sunday School Convention in Tokyo, a new method for the expression of their religious natures was brought to the young people of Japan. Since then several mission schools in Japan have been studying the art of religious dramatization and through its channels the young people are being awakened to a realization of and love for the Bible. To the girls of Happy Hill School (Methodist), in Fukuoka, the vividness and reality of the birth of the Christ-child came with new force at the Christmas season of 1922, when the whole school gave the group of tableaux called *The Christmas Story*.[1]

The first question in any work of this kind in a foreign land is that of translation, but fortunately this group of tableaux is based on the story of *Ben Hur*, which is already available in Japanese. The best readers of the school were chosen to read the selections which preceded each picture. To most of the school the Bible story was already familiar, but the thrilling words of the story and its Oriental setting made it seem more a part of their own lives.

These Christmas tableaux were given by the school, not for an audience, but simply as their own celebration, to help them to understand the real meaning of Christmas. The readers were chosen by the teachers, but the other performers were selected by the girls themselves. This led them to study the whole Christmas story very carefully to find out what kind of girls should represent the Shepherds and the Wise-men, Joseph and Mary, Herod and the Priests, the Angels and Gabriel. The rest of the school—about one hundred and fifty girls—acted as the chorus. Thus every girl had a part. The time chosen was the sunset hour when the last rays of the sun streamed across the big room and made glory shine.

The girls took their parts with quiet seriousness and dignity. Their own Japanese dresses, cleverly adjusted, made costuming easy. In order that the proper settings might be painted, the best artists in school studied eagerly all the available pictures of the Christmas scenes and produced some really beautiful backgrounds. Now we saw the star shining over the city of Bethlehem, now the tents and camels of the Wise-men, and again the walls of the manger.

After each reading the curtains were drawn aside and the Christmas story enacted before us. The Wise-men were standing or kneeling with arms outstretched and eyes on the heavens from which came their sign, while the whole school burst into song,

"As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright,
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Ever more be led to thee."

"The Angel of the Lord came down"

The curtains were drawn aside again. There were the Shepherds, fallen back in fear, and the angels appearing above them. Japanese girls love to play the part of angels, and the girls to whom fell the privilege of wearing the white robes and silver wings were the admiration of the whole school. With beaming faces they all sang,

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around."

In another scene the proud Herod called the Wise-men to him and, questioning them about the new King, bade them go forth in search of the Child. They went off to the strains of:

*"As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold."*

[1]Jane Taylor Miller, The Woman's Press.

"O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie."

Then curtains were drawn aside for the last scene. They had found the Child King, lying in a manger, his mother Mary keeping watch. "And they fell down and worshiped him," while the whole school sang:

"Holy night, peaceful night,
All is dark, save the light.
Yonder where they sweet vigils keep
O'er the Babe, who in silent sleep
Rests in heavenly peace."

Not a word had been spoken throughout the hour and a half while these Japanese girls were telling the Christmas story to themselves. Only through picture and music had the spirit of the Christ been made to live in their hearts. The room was very still. And, as they sang the great recessional, *Hark! the herald angels sing*, one felt that this Christmas pageant had given them a new and lasting vision of the child of Bethlehem.

"Holy Night, Peaceful Night"

THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN INDIA

By Helen Tuck

ONE of the needs which we feel so keenly in India is that of giving to our boys and girls, as well as to other people, some of the inspiration and help which comes from well thought out and adequately presented programs for various Christian festivals. Our purpose in giving the Christmas story was to help all who saw and heard it to get a message which should not only enrich their own lives, but which they might present and carry into the villages and homes from which they had come. We kept all the setting as simple as possible, using material which was known to all those taking part and which they themselves used daily. One great benefit from the program was that we used every section of the Christian Community represented here. Joseph and Mary were represented by a young man and his bride, among the laity. The boys and girls of the schools sang the songs, the Bible reading was by a district worker. In this way we reached every group and many more people than we would otherwise have done. Every song was translated into Hindustani and the whole service was rendered in Hindustani and not in English.

The setting for the scenes was very simple. Different groups were made responsible for different scenes, for costuming, etc. For curtains we used sheets stitched together to which were sewed wire rings, and then strung on a heavy wire so that they slipped back and forth easily. In the window directly over the stage we had a star lighted by an acetylene lamp. At the beginning of the second scene the lamp was placed back of the star making a beautiful setting.

The footlights were very effective. We set bricks, on end, across the front of the stage, leaving a passageway the width of the center aisle between the two lines. Along the floor we placed some two dozen small *chirags* (Hindustani wicks in oil, which are used for illumination.) These did not show from the audience and gave a very soft, pretty light on the stage. On the side facing the audience we covered the bricks with plants and foliage. In the first scene we used a hanging lamp. We have no electricity here. After that we had no light save what came from the *chirags* and the light in the manger.

The costuming was simple. We followed Jewish customs as much as we could, using pictures from magazines and THE CHURCH SCHOOL. One of the men had spent some time as a soldier in the Holy Land and gave us valuable suggestions. For the Wise-men we used two or three bright red and blue shawls which made a rich note. Costuming is always easy in this land where the men and women are accustomed to more or less flowing robes and to the turban.

Before the actual program was begun we had the audience sing a Christmas *bhajan*, followed by prayer. One thing which I think was very important was that each rehearsal was opened with prayer and we tried in every way to make all those taking part feel that this was a story which should be treated reverently. The boys and girls were in the spirit of reverence from the first rehearsal, and the night the program was given that spirit was evident to all who participated and to those who composed the audience. Even the littlest children sat quietly and reverently and seemed to catch a glimpse of the Christ spirit which we had tried to inculcate. After the prayer the actual program began by the reading of the Scripture passage relating to the scene about to be shown; then the curtain was drawn back. There was almost no speaking by those who took part.

In point of time it took about an hour and a quarter for the whole program. Following is the outline of the scenes with Scripture and music:

The Christmas Story

Scene I. Scripture Reading, Luke 1: 26-39.
Mary and the visitation of the angel.
Music, *The Magnificat* chanted by high-school girls.

Scene II. Scripture Reading, Luke 2: 1-8.
Mary, Joseph and the Babe.
Music, *Silent Night, Holy Night*, sung by middle-school girls.

Scene III. Scripture Reading, Matthew 2: 1-13.
The Coming of the Wise-men.
Music, *We Three Kings of Orient Are*, sung by three older boys.

(Continued on page 142)

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Isaiah

THE PROPHETS[1]

A Christmas Pageant

By Elisabeth Woodbridge
and Elisabeth T. Whitney

THE stage is in darkness. The curtains are drawn back, and an amber light reveals, at the center of the back, the motionless figure of *Moses*, holding before him the two tables of the law.

The reader, unseen, reads:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.—Heb. 1: 1.

And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him . . . saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, . . .

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. Lev. 1: 1, 2a; Deut. 6: 4-9.

(*From the right, enters Joshua. He walks slowly toward the middle of the stage illumined by the amber lights, and stands, if necessary, waiting for the conclusion of the reading, his hand on his half-drawn sword. When the reader pauses, Joshua turns and walks slowly back to his position on Moses' left.*)

Reading for Joshua: Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua, . . . saying, As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage: . . . Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, . . . This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: . . . Fear Jehovah and serve him in sincerity and truth. Josh. 1: 1, 5b-8; 24: 14.

(*From the left, enters Elijah, in the amber light, which changes to red during the reading. At the conclusion he also turns and walks slowly back to his position on Moses' right.*)

Reading for Elijah: And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. . . . (*Lights dimmed.*)

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. (*Brilliant red light.*)

Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burned sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

And when the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; The Lord, he is the God. 1 Kings 18: 21-39.

(*The amber light from one side and the red light from the other illumine the figure of Ezekiel, who enters from the left. After the reading he takes his place at Elijah's right, leaving space between, which Daniel will occupy later.*)

Reading for Ezekiel: The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.

And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house. But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; He that heareth, let him hear. . . .

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and you shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. Ezekiel 1: 3a, 4; 3: 24, 27; 36: 25a, 26a, 27, 28b.

(*The light dims, green may be added, or used without amber. From the right, Micah enters, and takes his place on Moses' left, leaving space for three figures between.*)

Reading for Micah: The word of the Lord that came to Micah. . . .

O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants.

Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 1: 1; 6: 3, 4, 6-8.

(*The light grows brighter, and from the left the Herdsman, Amos, enters. He takes his place beside Ezekiel on his right.*)

Reading for Amos: The words of Amos: I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit. And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.

[1]Copyright, 1923, by Elisabeth Woodbridge.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God: I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good; let judgment run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream.

For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name. Amos 1: 1a; 7: 14b-15; 3: 11; 5: 12, 14, 15a, 24; 4: 13.

(*Hosea enters from the left. He takes his place at Amos' right.*)

The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea:

Reading for Hosea: Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. . . . Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. . . . For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. Hosea 1: 1a; 6: 1, 3; 14: 1; 6: 6.

(*The light grows very dim. From the right Jeremiah enters. He takes his place on Joshua's left.*)

The words of Jeremiah—to whom the word of the Lord came—

Reading for Jeremiah: How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies. Her children are gone into captivity before the enemy. Lam. 1: 1-5.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord. Jeremiah 31: 31-34.

(*Zephaniah enters from the left. He takes his place at the extreme right of the line of prophets.*)

The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah:

Reading for Zephaniah: The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.

Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger. . . . In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. Zephaniah 1: 1, 14, 15; 2: 3; 3: 16, 17.

(*The full amber light is restored as Joel enters. He takes his place on Zephaniah's left.*)

The word of the Lord that came to Joel:

Reading for Joel: And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. Joel 1: 1; 2: 28, 29, 32a.

(*From the right Haggai enters. He takes his place beside Micah, on his left.*)

In the second year of Darius the king, came the word of the Lord by Haggai:

Reading for Haggai: Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the Lord . . . and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts. Haggai 1: 1, 13; 2: 4b, 6, 7, 9.

(*From the right Zechariah enters. The light grows brighter. He takes his place at the extreme left of the line of prophets, corresponding to Zephaniah on the other end.*)

In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah . . .

Reading for Zechariah: Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord . . . and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. Zechariah 1: 1a; 6: 12-13.

(*From the right Malachi enters. He takes his place between Zechariah and Haggai.*)

The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.

I have loved you, saith the Lord. Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. Malachi 1: 1, 2a; 3: 7b; 4: 2a.

(*From the left Daniel enters. He takes his place between Elijah and Ezekiel.*)

Daniel had a dream and Daniel spake and said:

Reading for Daniel: I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Daniel 7: 1, 2, 13-14.

(*From the right Habakkuk enters. He takes his place on Micah's right.*)

The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

Reading for Habakkuk: I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and watch to see what he will say unto me. . . .

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Amos

And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it. Habakkuk 1: 1; 2: 1a, 2, 3.

(*The light grows very bright, with rose and amber. From the right Isaiah enters.*)

Then came Isaiah the prophet, and said:

Reading for Isaiah: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and to comfort all that mourn; to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 39: 3; 61: 1, 2a, 3; 9: 2a, 6.

Annunciation and Nativity

At the conclusion of the reading the curtains just in front of the prophets are closed for a moment. Before they are opened again each figure assumes the

Zephaniah Joel Obadiah Hosea Amos Nahum Ezekiel Daniel Elijah

From a Copley Print.

The Frieze of th

Angels—By Fra Angelico

pose shown in Sargent's frieze of the prophets. The lights are turned full on the whole frieze, and the curtains are opened for a tableau. They are then closed again and this concludes the first part of the pageant. These curtains remain closed during the tableaux of the Annunciation and the Nativity. These tableaux follow the conventional designs of Italian painting of the fourteenth century. In the Nativity tableau, the Holy Family is grouped in the center of the stage. On each side stand one, or better two Fra Angelico angels, holding gilded trumpets. They are so near the side lights that it is possible to light the upper part of each figure, and the tips of the wings, in rose color, and the lower part in green. The central group is lighted in amber, from above, and a soft light streams from the manger and illuminates the face of Mary.

During the tableaux, or between them, the gospel story of the Annunciation and the Nativity is read, or may be chanted by a choir.

For the Annunciation and Nativity tableaux, overhead lighting, either using floods or a horizontal strip, gives beautiful effects, but is not essential. If the stage permits of using floods from the wings, the two rear strips can be dispensed with.

The front curtain is now closed. While the final tableau is being made ready, the congregation or the choir may sing one of the prophetic hymns.

The final tableau is arranged as follows:

The prophets resume their characteristic poses as in the frieze, the curtain directly in front of them is drawn back and remains back.

On the fore-stage, just behind the front curtain, the Nativity tableau resumes its pose, with its angels at extreme left and right, where they can be given special lighting. In the foreground the angel from the Annunciation tableau, holding a tall lily, kneels toward the manger, a little at one side so as not to obscure the central figures. If the stage permits it, two very little angels, in white, may be added, kneeling at the foot of the manger, opposite Mary. Joseph stands near them behind the manger.

When all is ready, the lights are turned on as follows:

On the prophets, strong amber light.

n, Publishers, Boston

John S. Sargent

Angels—By Fra Angelico

On the central Nativity group, pale amber or amber and white.

On the angels at each side, rose light above, green below.

From within the manger, the light of one 75-watt bulb, subdued and diffused by being covered with soft silk—a silk handkerchief will do.

The front curtain is now drawn open, revealing the Nativity scene with its angels, against a background of the prophets.

After the curtains are closed, the choir or congregation, or both, may sing a Christmas anthem. The chorus from the Messiah, "And his name shall be called Wonderful" would be completely expressive of the mood of the pageant.

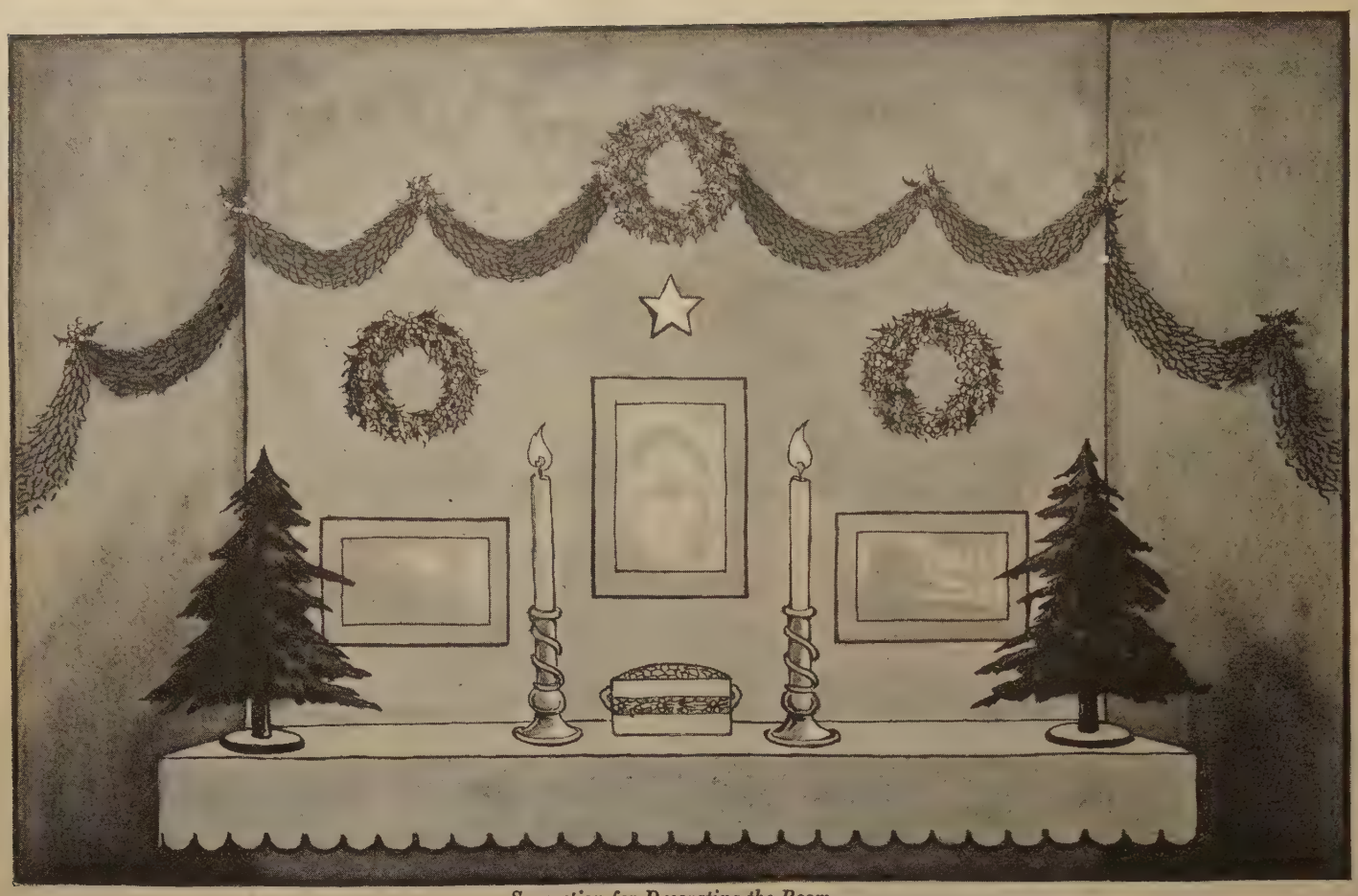
This concludes the pageant.

Notes on Staging, Lighting, and Costuming

Staging. Two curtains are necessary, one just in front of the frieze, the other at the very front of the stage. An entrance on each side of the stage is desirable, but one might be made to serve. The prophets, when in place in the frieze, should be raised a foot or more above the general level of the stage. A strip of boarding, 18 inches wide, at the back of the stage, covered with burlap, will accomplish this. The two tablets of the law may be made of canvas on a wooden frame, or of builders' boards, and painted as in the Sargent frieze. This painting is not difficult, and may be very roughly done. The gold design about the head and shoulders of Moses is painted on another board, set up behind him so that his head with its head-dress comes at the proper point. The figure of Moses is, of course, fixed and complete before the opening of the curtains.

Lighting. Four vertical strips are used, boards six inches wide and six feet high, to each of which are fastened four or five colored bulbs set in reflectors. A good amateur electrician and a carpenter can easily make these. Two strips are set up at each side of the stage, one pair just behind the rear curtain, equipped with amber lights for the frieze, the other pair just behind the front curtain, equipped with amber, red and green lights, also rose if possible. The green should be at the bottom, the red at the top, the amber near the middle.

(Continued on page 141)



Suggestion for Decorating the Room

THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

By Mary E. Ely

"JOY to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing—"

The festival spirit with its wholesome good cheer, collective action and social element, has a decided place at the Christmas season, providing as it does for the young people, who are often temporary artists, an opportunity for expression that is a sort of artistic impulse.

In reviving some of the quaint and lovely lore associated with the festivals, the carols, costumes, rimes, symbols and legends, we bring to the children a wealth of material for imaginative history, literature, art and music, which is absorbing, and their rightful heritage.

It is by our recognition of the importance and scope of these festive occasions as by nothing else, we feed in the young boy and girl the emotions of love, admiration, awe, reverence, gratitude and joy, of which the festival has at all times been the expression, and which are the fundamental forces in education and life.

The church-school Christmas festival emphasizes the spiritual significance of Christmas, its theme a universal need, world betterment, good will against ill will, a festival of the better self, Christmas in love and service, expressed in living and giving, wherever Christianity rules.

"Come thou, dear Prince, O come to us this holy Christmas time! Come to the busy marts of earth, the quiet homes, the noisy streets, the humble homes, come to us all, and with thy love touch every human heart, that we may know that love, and in its blessed peace bear charity to all mankind."—Phillips Brooks.

To nourish this idea and ideal, making it a part of life's action, the child is dependent, to a great extent, upon the insight and penetration, knowledge, guidance and character of those with whom he comes into intimate contact. He receives in proportion to his inspiration.

Our presentation to the children should be as perfect as our resources will permit.

If poets, dramatists, artists and musicians have found the story unsurpassed in beauty, emotional appeal, spiritual quality and inspiration, should we not avail ourselves of the best of their expressions to vivify feeling in the children of the church school?

A great festival maker says, "It is by the poetic, emotional appeal through the *outward* to the *inward* seeing eye and comprehending ear that the festival carries its message of family affection, of humanitarianism, of gratitude and of joy to the unsuspecting hearts of children."

Before our Sunday-Christmas celebration the way has been prepared by frequent meetings of children and teachers for discussion of Christmas plans, for making decorations for the gift tree; for deciding on the nature of our service to other children in hospital, creche, kindergarten or needy families. The one day celebration of Sunday in the church school gives far too short a time in which to establish Christmas habits or Christmas thoughts, to learn our Christmas songs and poems and to hear the beautiful Christmas stories ever afterward associated with this happy day. These intimate gatherings of children and teacher during the weeks preceding Christmas are valuable to both.

The Christmas season being a time of keen anticipation to childhood, let the teachers further this legitimate excitement by preparing a surprise for them in the decoration of the classroom, so that it will exhale an atmosphere of happiness, beauty and fragrance, telling through pictures, fragrant pine, incense and holly the story of the Christ-child's birth.

The Joy of Receiving

If a curtain could be hung in front of the central decorations and drawn after the children arrive, it would enhance their pleasure, and be a fitting climax to their anticipation.

Decking the Hall

"Then let the holly red be hung
And all the sweetest carols sung,
While we with joy remember them,
The journeyers to Bethlehem."

Hang in the center of your wall space in view of all the children, a large picture, preferably colored, of a Madonna and Child. Above this a golden star.

On either side of the Madonna hang pictures, the Wise-men's adoration, the Shepherds' adoration, and above these holly wreaths, and over all festoon garlands of Christmas greens.

Enlist the interest of the janitor in suspending a long board the length of the space used by the pictures. Cover this with a blue cloth. At each end place a small untrimmed Christmas tree and on either side of the Madonna, tall golden candlesticks with blue candles. Also on the shelf have an incense burner such as contained frankincense, and a beautiful casket and box such as the Wise-men brought. This will image to the children these gifts and clear any misunderstanding they may have regarding them. All available wall space and windows should bear holly wreaths and Christmas greens.

The large undecorated Christmas tree, the one to be trimmed by the children with ornaments previously made, the processional symbols, and offerings for the other children must have plenty of space around which the children can gather. Any art shop will be glad to loan the required pictures and candle sticks or they can be borrowed from friends. Every church school should own a beautiful Madonna as an inspiration to its children.

We now have a beautiful setting for the Christmas story, songs and whatever program has been planned. The impression made will be permanent and recalled whenever Christmas is mentioned. Is it not worth while to have this association, this vision in connection with the church?

The Processional

"Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the newborn king.'"

The symbols of Christmas, the dove of peace, the bells of heaven, the star of Bethlehem, the Christmas berries and greens, the cornucopias and baskets containing ornaments and gifts for the tree service should be carried by the children in the processional, each child having something in his hand.

These symbols should be mounted on wands and carried above the heads of the children as they march and sing. Color should abound in the processional, as it reveals and strengthens the emotional appeal of joyousness. Each child should be adorned by a head wreath previously prepared by the teacher or parents for the occasion; a strand of silver tinsel, tied in a bow, or a bunch of red berries sewed on a green band or a crown with a golden star in front. This intensifies the part the child has to express in his song and action.

Giving to Those Less Fortunate Than We

Thinking It Over

Appropriate processional music, happy and with an onward impulse, finally going over into song, should accompany the procession as the children move in unison through the rooms.

Order of Exercises for the Festival

When all the children have assembled, sing a Christmas greeting, "Merry Christmas." Then draw the curtain from in front of the pictures and decorations. Allow time for expressions of pleasure, recognition and association of material things with a spiritual setting.

Sing descriptive songs as told by pictures,

Away in a Manger.

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night.

We Three Kings of Orient Are.

Joyous songs, as *Ring the Bells of Heaven; Christ, the Lord, Is Born.*

Chimes can accompany some of the melodies. A violin would add greatly in helping the festive spirit and in keeping the songs pure in tone.

Light the candles in the tall candlesticks and also the incense. With feeling and

(Continued on page 140)

THE MAGIC EVE

A Christmas Play for Little Children

By Elizabeth H. Wyman

Wait

Christmas Tree

Popcorn Maid

The Characters

MARJORIE and Billy, who are looking for a Christmas that mother will like and find many things.

Christmas Fairy	Nuts
Jack Rabbit	Popcorn Maids
Waits	Christmas Clowns
Holly Wreaths	Santa Claus
Oranges	Mother

THE PLAY

Scene One

Living room of modern apartment. Shallow fireplace at rear. Two children sit near it by a low table. Marjorie is busy painting a blotter in Christmas colors and Billy is pasting a picture on a little calendar.

Marjorie (*as curtain rises speaks incredulously*): Billy, mother never said that!

Billy: Yes, she did!

Marjorie: How could she?

Billy: Well, she did. She told daddy she had to find something for Mrs. Weeks, you know, the one I don't 'specially like 'cause she's always wanting to kiss me. She said Christmas was getting to be a *perfect* nuisance. It wasn't a bit like the ones she had when she was a child.

Marjorie: Oh, Billy, how could she talk that way? I couldn't live without Christmas. Could you?

Billy: No, but then mother and father are awful old. They don't play marbles or ball or anything.

Marjorie: But mother loves my dollies!

Billy (*scornfully*): That's diff'runt! What do you suppose Christmas was like when mother was a girl, Marjorie?

Marjorie: I don't know, but it must have been at grandma's house. Don't you remember how we used to go there?

Billy (*shakes his head in negative*).

Marjorie: I guess maybe you were too little. Can't you remember the littlest bit?

Billy: I don't think so, e'cept—(*excitedly*) Was it a big white house with a lot of white snow all round an' a big fire, an' stockings?

Marjorie: Yes, yes, an' *everybody* hung up their stockings, me and grandpa and grandma and mother and father an' there was a little sock for the baby. Why, Billy, *you* were the baby. Isn't that funny!

Billy: Did we have a Christmas tree, too?

Marjorie: Of course we did, and grandpa got it right out of the woods and dragged it in over the snow.

Billy: Oh, Marjorie!

Marjorie: And then grandma and mother popped some corn and strung it in long strings and they let me help.

Billy: What did you do with it?

Marjorie: We put it on the Christmas tree, and some of it we ate, and grandma made popcorn balls with molasses on.

Billy: Umm! I wish I had some! Don't you, Marjorie?

Marjorie: Uh, huh! They were just awfully good!

Billy: Marjorie, let's get a Christmas tree, a real one, I mean, out in the woods, an' popcorn an' everything, an' stockings an' put our presents in mother's, an' then she'll think it's just like the ones at grandma's and like it again.

Marjorie: I don't see how we could get a tree. We're too little.

Billy: Yes, we could. I'm big and strong, —an' maybe we could find some one to help us chop it down.

Marjorie: Where will we go? And how will we get there?

Billy: I don't know. I don't believe I have much money to take us with. (*Puts his hand in his pocket and draws out a tiny purse. Opens it over the table and two pennies roll out.*) You can have one of them, but I don't believe it is enough.
(*At that moment the Christmas Fairy dances in to the tune of "Kris Kringle is Coming."*)

Christmas Fairy: Yes, it is enough, for those are magic pennies.

Billy and Marjorie: Magic pennies! (*They bend over and look at them with awe.*)

Marjorie: They look just like any other kind.

Christmas Fairy: It isn't the looks that makes them magic. It's what you do with them, and two magic pennies can do a lot on Christmas Eve. (*Picks up one.*) This one is magic because Billy wants to use it to find a Christmas for his mother.

Marjorie (*holding up the other*): I know why this one's magic!

Christmas Fairy: Do you?

Marjorie: Yes, because Billy gave it to me so I could go with him. O, Christmas Fairy, I have five cents. Can you make that magic too?

Christmas Fairy: Perhaps so.

Marjorie (*flies out of the room and is back in an instant with a nickel*): Please make it magic!

Christmas Fairy: What do you want to do with it?

Marjorie: I want all the little children to have a Merry Christmas and their mothers and daddies too.

Christmas Fairy (*takes the nickel*): It *is* a magic nickel now and Santa and I will do our best to see that you have your wish. Come now, for your pennies must carry you a long way out into the magic forest.

Billy: Shall I take my hatchet so we can chop down a Christmas tree?

Christmas Fairy: You don't need your hatchet. Christmas Tree is there waiting and she'll be ready to come. You will see some of my other helpers too, and we'll find just the kind of a Christmas that mother will like. (*The two children take hold of her hands and together they go toward the doorway as the curtain falls.*)

Scene Two

The magic woods where anything can happen on Christmas Eve. Christmas Tree stands pensively in one corner. Enter Jack Rabbit.

Jack Rabbit: Why do you look so sad, Christmas Tree?

Christmas Tree (*starts with surprise and lifts up her drooping head*): I was lonely. I thought every one had forgotten me. But you are talking, Jack Rabbit! I never heard you before.

Jack Rabbit: Of course. All the animals can talk on Christmas Eve, and the trees too. You've just been talking yourself.

Christmas Tree: Could you really hear me? I talk all the year round, but no one knows it. They say the wind is blowing through my branches.

Jack Rabbit: That's because they can't understand you. I can't either other times, though my ears are long and I can hear everything that is going on. Hark! Some one is coming now. This magic eve every one comes through here on their way to celebrate the Christmas. You'll not be lonely any longer. (*Enter Waits clad in old English costumes.*)

Christmas Tree: Oh-h-h! Who are you and where are you going?

First Wait: We are the Christmas Waits of old and we are going to the church to sing in the Christmas Day.

Christmas Tree: Won't you sing for me?

First Wait: Why don't you go to church with us?

Christmas Tree: Alas, I cannot. My feet are rooted to the earth.

Jack Rabbit: She cannot move till the Christmas Fairy comes to set her free to take her part in the Christmas.

First Wait: Why, then, we'll sing for her. Come, children all. We'll sing our carols for this Christmas Tree and it may be that the Christmas Fairy will come, summoned by our voices.

(*The Waits sing several carols: God Rest You Merry Gentlemen; There Were Three Ships Came Sailing By, etc.*)

First Wait: We must go now to reach the church before the hour of midnight. Good Even to you both.

Christmas Tree: Good Even, and thanks for your kindness.

Jack Rabbit: Good Even and may your Christmas be merry.

(*Waits pass out, continuing in the same direction which they were taking as they came on. Enter Christmas Fairy with Marjorie and Billy.*)

Christmas Fairy: Ah, there she is, waiting for me to free her for her part in the Christmas celebration. Just a little longer, Christmas Tree. I must send many of my messengers this evening, but you shall see them go and the time will not seem long. (*To Billy and Marjorie.*) Sit down under her branches and you too shall see strange things. But do not speak. My children are shy. (*The children take their places in the corner close to the Christmas Tree.*)

Jack Rabbit (*hopping up to them and touching Billy with one paw*): Are they real, Christmas Fairy? Why am I not afraid?

Christmas Fairy: On Christmas Eve in the magic forest no one hurts another. But tell me, Jack Rabbit, where are my people? Your ears are long and hear everything. They are late in coming.

Jack Rabbit (*putting his ear to the ground*): They are coming now, Christmas Fairy. I hear the laughter of the holly wreaths as they come from the forests of the south to do your bidding. (*Enter Holly Wreaths.*)

First Wreath: Are we late, Christmas Fairy? It took us long to dress this year, but we wished to be as beautiful as possible to do your errands. There are many thousands more on their way. With them we will do your commands.

Christmas Fairy: We must be quick, for the whole earth must be covered this night. What part do you choose for your own?

First Wreath: I will go with my band to every church I can find. Not one shall be without the red and green of the holly. (*She and her companions go out.*)

Christmas Fairy: Good! (*To Second Wreath.*) Where will you go?

Second Wreath: I and my companions will deck the shop windows so that no one will forget to buy toys for the children this Christmas Eve.

Christmas Fairy (*patting her on the shoulder*): Well chosen! No one must be allowed to neglect the children at the Christmas season.

Third Wreath: We will go to every home that will let us enter.

Marjorie (*starting up impulsively*): You'll go to ours, won't you? (*Wreaths huddle together as if startled at the sound of her voice. Marjorie claps her hand over her mouth and looks apologetically at Christmas Fairy.*)

Christmas Fairy (*to Wreaths*): It's all right, little wreaths. Two mortals have come to our forest, but you need not fear. They have Christmas in their hearts. (*To Marjorie.*) Be careful lest the spell be broken. (*Exit Third Wreath and her band.*) (*To Fourth Wreath.*) Where will you take the cheer of your bright berries?

Fourth Wreath (*shyly*): Let us go to the hospitals, dear Christmas Fairy, where the sick and crippled children are.

Christmas Fairy (*warmly*): You have chosen the best of all, sweet child. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

(*Fourth Wreath and her companions go out and Christmas Fairy watches them smilingly. As she stands thus, there is a rush from the other direction and Christmas Fairy turns around to find herself surrounded by a group of oranges that take hold of hands and dance about her in a circle. They then drop each other's hands and twirl about on their toes, swing their companions in a grand chain about the Christmas Fairy and perform other evolutions to the sound of music till the Christmas Fairy laughingly waves her wand for quiet.*)

Christmas Fairy: Stop, you mischievous little roly polys, or you will never learn what you have to do before the morning comes.

Oranges (*lining up in a military row and putting their hands at salute*): Ask us!

Christmas Fairy: Well, what is it?

(*In the following answer each orange acts out his particular line with fitting but exaggerated gestures.*)

First Orange: Over the ground,

Second Orange: Swiftly we bound,

Third Orange: Each little ball of yellow.

Fourth Orange: Into the house,

Fifth Orange: Still as a mouse.

Sixth Orange: It's fun for any fellow.

First Orange: Up the stair

Second Orange: Through the air

Third Orange: To find the stockings small.

Fourth Orange: Into the toe

Fifth Orange: Straight we go,

Sixth Orange: The very first of all.

Christmas Fairy (*laughing*): You do know something in spite of your nonsense. But suppose the children have forgotten to hang up their stockings!

First Three: Forget a stocking?

Second Three: *Oh*, how *shocking!* (*All shake their heads in dismay.*)

Christmas Fairy: Oh, well, they probably won't. But where are the other little fellows that always travel with you? (*Oranges act very much excited as they look around.*)

First Orange: Why, why, they're lost!

Second Orange: At any cost

Third Orange: They must be found.

Fourth Orange: We'll look around.

Fifth Orange: I'll this way go.

Sixth Orange: Look high and low!

Jack Rabbit: They'll be here, Christmas Fairy. They're always late. (*Hops toward entrance.*) They're coming! (*Six nuts enter, fairly bursting with giggles, and their appearance made grotesque by artificial eyes of half walnut shells painted and with a hole cut through at the pupil to see through.*)

Christmas Fairy: Where *have* you been? A little longer and you would have been too late to go into the children's stockings.

First Nut (*giggling again*): We got part way here and we forgot where we were going; so we had to go back home and start over again.

Christmas Fairy: Where are all the rest?

Nut

You aren't enough to fill the children's stockings.

Second Nut: Uncle Wal Nut was coming with us, but he's cracked!

Third Nut: Aunt Hazel Nut fell from a tree and split her new coat!

Fourth Nut: And Grandpa Cocoa Nut fell on the sidewalk and spilled all his milk and he's heartbroken over it.

Fifth Nut: And the Brazil Nuts have turned out to be such hard characters that we aren't allowed to associate with them any more.

Sixth Nut: And the Chest Nuts are so tiresome we left them home.

Christmas Fairy: Tut, tut!

Sixth Nut: Anyway, they were hanging around the kitchen and cook put them in the turkey stuffing!

Second Nut: And the almonds hated their ugly brown coats so much they got cook to take them off and then they were blanched with fear at the thought of coming out without them. (*All giggle hilariously.*)

Christmas Fairy: Dear, dear! What a family you are! But what ever became of the raisins? They should be here with you.

First Nut: They were in the kitchen too and half of them got put in the mince pie.

Jack Rabbit: They always do, Christmas Fairy, but the others are on their way. They're great travelers and they'll catch up with the nuts before they reach the stockings.

Christmas Fairy (*looking despairingly at the nuts*): How can I ever be sure that *you* will get there. You *are* such a heedless lot.

First Orange: I'll take the first (*suiting the action to the words*).

Second Orange: And I the worst (*doing likewise*).

Third Orange: I'll take another (*ditto*).

Fourth Orange: And I his brother (*ditto*).

Fifth Orange: Together we'll go (*taking hold of another*).

Sixth Orange: To the stocking's toe (*taking last one*).

(*They march off together, the oranges holding firmly to the nuts, the nuts gaping about, stumbling, and otherwise adding to the difficulties of the oranges.*)

Marjorie: Oh, Christmas Fairy, they *are* so funny!

Christmas Fairy: We couldn't get along without the nuts, but they are a trial. Jack Rabbit, who else is on the way?

(*Music for "Three Little Maids from School" from "The Mikado" strikes up.*)

Jack Rabbit: That must be the Popcorn Maids.

(*Three Popcorn Maids come in dancing. They sing the following and execute a few steps in time to the music between the stanzas.*)

Three little popcorn maids are we,
Crisp and white as we can be,
Full of fun as you can see,
Three little popcorn maids.

(*One sings*)
This little maid is called Pop Pop,
(*Others sing*)
Two little maids go hippety hop,
(*All sing*)
Three little maids right here on the spot,
Three little popcorn maids.

Three little maids must pop away,
To be in time for Christmas Day,
They're sorry they can no longer stay,
Three little popcorn maids.

(*Popcorn Maids dance off the scene.*)

Christmas Fairy: We must soon be on our way. Christmas Tree, do you feel any different?

Christmas Tree: My roots are prickling. Is it time, Fairy, for me to move?

Christmas Fairy: Not quite. Our jolly Christmas clowns have not yet appeared. But be ready. You will soon be free to go. Jack Rabbit, summon the clowns. I must see them on their way before we go ourselves.

Jack Rabbit (*hops to entrance*): They are here, Christmas Fairy. Your command has brought them. (*The six clowns solemnly somersault in, one at a time, and sit in a row with their feet stretched out in front of them, and their hands braced on the floor behind them in the stiff position of dolls.*)

Christmas Fairy: Well, what can you little fellows do to make the children happy this Christmas?

First Clown: We can sing—

Second Clown: If you squeeze our stomachs—

Third Clown: But not too hard—

Fourth Clown: Or you'll tickle us.

Fifth Clown: And then we can't sing—

Sixth Clown: At all.

Christmas Fairy: Very well, I'll be careful.

(*The clowns jump up. The first one sings half of the following strain as the Christmas Fairy presses his stomach, the second one takes up the second half, and the others come in successively in the same way, so that when the Christmas Fairy reaches the end of the line they are all singing the repeated strain, nodding their heads and jumping stiffly in time to the music. They keep it up over and over till the Fairy cries for them to stop. Even then they break out spasmodically as if running down. Finally one somersaults toward the exit, the others following.*)

Tinkle-tinkle tink-le Tinkle-tinkle tink-tink

(*During this scene Billy and Marjorie are so interested that they get up from where they are sitting by the tree and press forward. As the clowns leave, Marjorie speaks enthusiastically.*)

Marjorie: O Christmas Fairy, I wish mother was here. She just couldn't help liking this kind of a Christmas.

Billy: No, she couldn't.

Christmas Fairy: Now don't you worry about that. When I put you on your way home, I'm going to see your mother myself. (*Mysteriously.*) We're going shopping together.

Billy: Has she any magic pennies?

Christmas Fairy: A lot of them will be magic before the evening is over.

Marjorie: Oh, I'm glad. You're a wonderful Christmas Fairy.

(*Sound of sleigh bells off stage. Voice calling, "Speedaway, speedaway, Prancer and Vixen," followed by jolly laughter.*)

Christmas Tree: The time has come. We must be going. You can hear, Santa's on his way.

Marjorie (*excitedly*): Won't he go with us?

Christmas Fairy: He has a great many other places to go first, but you'll see

Orange

him later. (*Turning to Christmas Tree.*) Now, little tree, we'll free you from the earth; so you may go on the wings of the wind and find your place for the Christmas celebration.
(*She waves her wand over the tree and as she does so the curtain falls.*).

Scene Three

(*Same as Scene 1. As curtain rises, Christmas Tree is disclosed in the corner decked with strings of popcorn and electric light bulbs of different colors. On the top of her cap is a glittering star. Along the mantel is a row of stockings out of one of which protrude the articles the children have been making. One of the Christmas Wreaths is adjusting the greens over the mantel, a Popcorn Maid is hanging a string of the popcorn on the tree, and one of the Christmas Clowns is propped up against the wall by the tree.*)

Christmas Tree (*with a sigh of contentment*): I never, never thought I could be so beautiful.

Holly Wreath: All we live for is the Christmas time when our berries are red and we make the rooms look pretty and gay.

Popcorn Maid: My strings are not gay, but the children would be disappointed if they did not find me on your branches, Christmas Tree. Don't you remember what Marjorie said about Christmas at her grandma's?

Christmas Clown: I wish you'd try me, Popcorn Maid, and see if I can make my music. We came so fast to get here before Marjorie and Billy that I lost my breath and I don't know whether my music is left in me or not. (*Popcorn Maid presses him in the stomach and he sings his song. In a relieved tone.*) That's all right, then. I'm going to sleep after my long trip. (*Slides down limply with feet sprawling out and closes his eyes.*)

Holly Wreath (*standing back and surveying the mantel*): There, that's fixed. It must be time for the children to be here. Are you through, Popcorn?

Popcorn: Just about. (*Changes a string slightly. Suddenly alert.*) What's that? The children are coming. We must run. (*Lights go out and they run out of door right. The children enter left.*)

Billy: Marjorie, I'm almost sure I heard some one talking.

Marjorie: So did I. And I thought I saw some one running out of the door. But it's so dark. (*Lights suddenly flash on, illuminating the stage. At the same time the electricity is turned on in the bulbs of the Christmas Tree.*) O Billy! There's the darling tree we saw in the woods. Then we didn't dream it. (*To Tree.*) Can you speak now, Christmas Tree? (*Christmas Tree is silent.*)

Billy: Maybe it's only in the magic woods that the trees can talk.

Marjorie: I guess that's so, but I'm glad she's here anyway. Mother will be sure to like her as well as the trees she had when she was a girl. She's such a darling! (*Christmas Tree smiles.*) There, Billy, she's smiling! She knows we love her even if she can't talk.

Billy (*has been exploring about the room. He goes up to the stockings and feels in them. He speaks excitedly*): O Marjorie! The oranges have been here. There's one in every toe. And I think the nuts are there too. (*Marjorie feels with him.*)

Marjorie: They are, they are!

Billy (*stoops down and picks up a pair of shell eyes*): And one of them left his eyes! (*Fits the shells into his own eyes.*)

Marjorie: O Billy, you look so funny! Let me!

Billy (*finds another pair on the floor*): Here are some more. I'm sure they left them on purpose so we'd know they've been here. (*Both the children put them on and march about the room. In doing so they spy the Christmas Clown sprawled against the wall with his eyes closed.*)

Marjorie (*gives a shriek and lets the shells fall from her eyes*): Oh, look at him! He's walked so far he's fast asleep. (*The two children pull him up and prop him against the wall. His eyes pop open, but his face is expressionless.*) I wonder if he still makes music! (*She presses his stomach and he begins.*)

Christmas Clown: Tinkle, tinkle, tink-le. Tinkle, tinkle, tink, tink! (*The children listen with delight. He runs down in the middle of a bar. Billy presses his stomach again and he begins, but his music is fainter and he stops abruptly.*)

Marjorie: Poor thing, let's give him a rest. He's tired!
(*They leave him to himself and he slumps down once more and his eyes close.*)

Marjorie: Listen! (*A jingling of bells and a laugh are heard outside.*)

Billy: Santa Claus! Do you suppose he will try to climb down the chimney? (*Goes to chimney and looks up.*) He'll certainly get stuck if he does!

Santa Claus (*bursts in doorway*): Ho, ho! The old fellow's too smart for that! I have to do all sorts of things when people build their chimneys too small. How do you suppose I got in?

Billy: I don't know. Tell me!

Santa Claus: Ho, ho! I climbed into the dumbwaiter when no one was looking and I pulled myself up! I tell you it was a pretty hard job with my pack and all. But some of the things got here before me, didn't they? Ho, ho! The Christmas Fairy is pretty smart and so are all the Christmas Fixings. They know the short cuts to the places where the children live. But dear me, dear me, how am I going to work with you children not in bed?

Billy (*has been studying him closely*): You look an awful lot like my daddy, 'cept that you have such an enormously long beard.

Santa Claus: I do, do I?

Billy (*sturdily*): Yes, and you sound like him too!

Santa Claus: Ho, ho, ho! Ho, ho, ho! Of course I do. And I'll tell you why. On Christmas Eve I'm daddy to all the boys and girls in the world. Ho, ho, ho! But come, come! to bed! to bed!

Mother (*enters energetically and hurriedly, her arms full of packages and holly. She stops short at sight of the Christmas decorations*): Why, what in the world has been going on? And Santa Claus is here too!

Marjorie and Billy (*shrieking with delight*): O mother! (*They both rush at her and fling their arms around her. Her packages drop to the floor.*)

Billy: Mother, our stockings are crammed full and there's something in yours that we made, but you mustn't look till tomorrow!

Mother (*laughing*): I won't!

Marjorie: And, mother, look at Christmas Tree! She came from the magic forest. We went there with our magic pennies. Christmas Fairy took us, and Holly Wreath must have been here and the Popcorn Maids and one of the Christmas Clowns stayed here. (*She stops for want of breath.*)

Mother (*laughing again*): I don't know at all what you're talking about, but it's the loveliest Christmas Eve I ever knew.

Marjorie: Mother, really? Is it as nice as the ones you had when you were a girl?

Mother: It's ever so much nicer, because I didn't have you then. (*Puts her arms around the children. They cling to her in delight.*)

Marjorie: And you don't think it's a nuisance, do you?

Mother: Dear me, no! It's the greatest fun in the world. But come now, it's long past your bedtime and I'm sure Santa has some work to do before he goes. I'll give you just two minutes while I get your beds ready. (*Goes out.*)

Marjorie (*after a second's pause*): You see, Billy. You *must* have been mistaken. Mother never could have said that Christmas was a nuisance.

Billy: Yes, she did, but maybe she didn't mean it. Grown folks are awfully queer!

Marjorie: But I like them, don't you, Billy?

Billy: Uhhuh! 'specially mother!

Marjorie: And daddy!

(*They go slowly toward the doorway. Santa Claus looks after them, shaking his sides with laughter, then plunges his hands deep into his sack. In the distance comes the sound of Waits singing, "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear." It grows louder, then dies away. Santa stands listening with a toy in his hands as the curtain falls.*)

Suggestions for Stage Setting and Costumes

The stage setting for this play may be made very simply. The walls of the living room may be formed by screens covered with brown burlap and so arranged as to join the fireplace in the center and leave space for openings right and left. The rest of the furniture should consist merely of a table and two chairs so that it may be easily removed.

For the second scene the background may be changed by turning the other side of the screen to the front and providing an extra one to hide the fireplace. This side may be covered with strips of white crepe paper to suggest a snowy landscape or may be hung with dark blue fabric to represent the night sky. The floor may be represented as covered with snow in the following way: Between two strips of floor boarding as long as the stage is deep fasten white muslin sufficient to cover the floor. When it is not in use it may be rolled on the boards. If it is made a little wider than the floor space the two boards may be allowed to hang over the side of the stage and the weight will be sufficient to hold the covering in place. It should then be sprinkled with a liberal coating of artificial snow which will roll up with the muslin after it has been used and be easily removed.

The conventional white costume of the Christmas Fairy may be varied by the

(Continued on page 143)

A DECEMBER PROGRAM FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT[1]

By
Lucy Stock Chapin

The Holy Family
Artist, Ittenbach

For the general directions in program building see the explanatory notes accompanying the October program

The December Interest

ALL interests in December center about Christmas which is the dearest day of the year to little children. Christmas is also the church school's great opportunity for developing the child's religious life. With the coming of Christmas the children have many interests, for there are the home and school and church-school preparations. Gifts are to be selected and made, carols learned and recitations memorized. Then there are the fascinating shop windows and toy departments to entice the children. Altogether it is a season of excitement and intense restlessness.

With all of the preparations there is danger of the real spirit of Christmas being crowded out. Many a home leads the child thought no farther than Santa Claus. The church school must do better and teach that the real spirit of Christmas is "to make others happy."

In talks and stories of Christmas let the aim be to prepare the children for the coming and keeping of the birthday of Jesus, emphasizing the part they may have in making their friends at home happy and also in bringing joy to other little children less fortunate than themselves.

The real meaning of the Christmas message will come to the children only as they are busy planning to make some one else happy. Songs and stories and pictures are the background and are of little value without the child's own expression.

As the fingers are busy at work the impression is deepened and the real meaning of Christmas comes to the little workers. Some of the work may be done during the Sunday session if it is impossible for the children to meet during the week, but certainly the moments before the session can be used to great advantage.

Pre-Session Work

First of all, immediately after Thanksgiving, let the children help to decide what they would like to do as a department to keep the birthday of Jesus. The making of the gifts may be directed during these moments before the opening of the session. It may be that the children will trim a tree for some little shut-in or a hospital ward or mission school. They will take delight then in making the ornaments for the tree. Paper stars, chains and lanterns are easily made. Then there are little gifts to be put on the tree or made for home friends or other children, such as cards, cornucopias, book-marks, calendars, blotters, baskets, twine boxes, etc. Scrapbooks for hospitals are always appreciated.

The making of a Christmas poster is another project which the children enjoy and which tends to deepen the impression. They may work on it for several Sundays. It may picture the story of the Wise-men or the shepherd story, or it may be merely a general seasonal poster.

While the children work the teacher has a rare opportunity to tell stories for which there is not time and which are not appropriate during the regular session but which are of great value.

Building the Program

In building the programs for December, the superintendent should study the lessons for the three grades and weave into the programs the stories and memory verses of all grades. All of the memory verses will be used as fast as they are learned, for they all bear upon the Christmas thought. Additional verses may be introduced by the superintendent without attempting to have them learned by the children.

Each Sunday let the superintendent or some one selected for the purpose tell a Christmas story to the entire department. The best loved story of all, *The Baby Jesus*

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in the Manger, should be told early in the month. The next Sunday it may be followed by the story of the Wise-men. There is no danger of telling these stories too often.

There are other stories which may supplement these, such as *The Christ-Child Story*, told by Andrea Hofer Proudfoot in *Child's Christ Tales*, or David De Forest Burrell's beautiful story, *The Gift*, can be condensed and adapted for telling. If the children are restless and excited the story will tend to rest and quiet them.

Pictures also will bring the Christmas message whether used with the stories or placed about the room as silent messengers. This is the season when the children should learn to know and love some of the Madonna pictures. For the central or chief picture select the detail of the Sistine Madonna. To this add other Madonna pictures and either Carl Muller's or Feuerstein's *Holy Night* and Lerolle's *Arrival of the Shepherds*. Encourage the children to talk about the pictures.

There is a wealth of Christmas music, but let us not make the mistake of teaching too many songs. Children cannot learn many songs. One or possibly two new songs, if they are short and simple, should be enough, but the old songs can be reviewed and will be loved by the children even better than the new ones. A number of old songs and one or two new ones should give a sufficient number to make the programs of the month varied and interesting.

Among the good songs are the following:

Melodies
A Gift from Heaven.
On the Hills of Judah.
Christmas.
Story of the Wise Men.

Carols
The Manger Story.
Under the Stars.
Silent Night.
A Christmas Carol.

Songs for Little People
The Blessed Day.
Christmas Song.
Carol, Children, Carol.
What Can I Give Him?
Luther's Christmas Manger Hymn.
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks.
Merry Christmas to All.
Comes the Christ-Child Gentle.

Child-Land in Sunday School
Little Christmas Baby.

Songs for the Little Child.
Christmas Tree.

In *Songs for Little People* there are several winter songs which may be used through all the winter months. Among them are:
Hide and Seek.
Tiny Little Snowflakes.
When the Snow Is on the Ground.
Winter Hymn.

A December Program

I. Service of Worship

1. Prelude—Music of *Silent Night.*
   Songs for Little People.
2. Song—*Winter Hymn.*
   Songs for Little People.
3. Conversation—
   About the snow and frost and God's care for the sleeping flowers, followed by the recitation of winter verses.
   "He giveth snow like wool."
   "He casteth forth his ice like morsels."
   "He scattereth his frost like ashes."
   "He causeth his wind to blow."
4. Prayer Service
   Preparation—
   When God sends his snow to cover the flowers and keep them warm and for us to enjoy, what shall we say to him? And when we think of the happy times we have sliding on the ice that God made, what shall we say?
   These are God's gifts to us. Can you think of other things that God has given us? Food and home and clothing, sunshine and trees and flowers. What is God's very best gift?
   "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son."
   Prayer—
   Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for this day and for thy love and care over us. We thank thee for the snow and ice, for home and food and for all thy good gifts to us. Most of all we thank thee for Jesus and that we may keep his birthday. Help us to do something to make it a happy day for others for his sake. Amen.
   Prayer song—
   (Sung very softly with heads bowed.)
Loving Friend, oh, hear our prayer!
Take into thy tender care
All the leaves and flowers that sleep
In their white beds covered deep.
Shelter from the wintry storm
All thy snow-birds; keep them warm—
Hear our prayer.
Songs for Little People.
5. Song—*The Christmas Manger Hymn.*
   Songs for Little People. (Or any Christmas carol familiar to the children.)
6. Offering Service
   We are thinking today of Jesus' birthday and of how we are going to keep it by giving to make others happy. But there is a gift that we may give every Sunday for Jesus' sake. It is the gift of money. How does the Bible say we should give? "Freely ye received, freely give." There are children and grown people, too, who have never heard of God's gifts to us and of Jesus whose birthday we are planning to keep. We have brought our money today to help send the message to them and help them to know and love him.
   Offering Song—
   Prayer—
   Our Father, we are glad to bring our offering today to help others to know and love Jesus. May our money help them to have a happy Christmas. Amen.
   Response—
   All things come from thee, O Lord,
   And of thine own have we given thee.
   Amen.

II. First Lesson Period

Review of previous lessons and handwork.

III. Assembly Period

1. Birthday Service—
   While we are thinking of Jesus' birthday, we are glad for the birthdays of some of our little friends. They are happy today and we will sing for them our birthday wishes.
   Song—
   Birthday Wishes.
   Carols.
   Birthday Offering—
   Prayer—
   Dear Father in heaven, bless these birthday children. Make them happy and may they grow more and more like Jesus. For his sake. Amen.
   Record—
   Placing of seals on birthday calendar.
2. Special Feature—
   Telling of the manger story, followed by teaching of the song, *Little Christmas Baby*, in Child-Land in Sunday School, by Jones and Barbour. Published by The Arthur P. Schmidt & Co., 8 West 40th St., New York; or some other Christmas song.

IV. Second Lesson Period

Lesson for the day.

V. Closing Service

Prayer—
Our Father who art in heaven, we thank thee for the story of Jesus. We thank thee that we know and love him and that we can please him by making others happy. Help us to try to be like him—kind and gentle, loving and helpful. For his sake we ask it. Amen.
Song—
Closing Prayer
Songs for Little People.

NOTE: The Bible verses in this program are from the American Standard Version. Copyright, 1901, by Thomas Nelson and Sons.

SCISSORS AND PASTE AND TEN FINGERS

By Jessie Eleanor Moore

NOTHING that grows yields such harvests as the Christmas tree. Of course, you will have one. If the children trim it for some other children who will not be so fortunate, it will produce the fruits of unselfishness, sharing, friendship and service. But even if the tree is just for your own festival let the children make the ornaments with their own fingers. Such a tree will produce the fruit of lessons in cooperation and make it possible for the children really to experience the magic which is in that word "together."

To insure success—that is, joy in the doing and a product that will be the delight of all and the crowning glory of the festival—be careful to observe the following rules:

1. Begin early. Immediately after Thanksgiving is none too soon.

2. Use only the products of the children's fingers. Do not mix the home-made ornaments with the baubles and tinsel bought in the stores.

3. Have a color scheme, such as red, white, and silver. Red is the Christmas color and is really necessary to light up the dark branches of the tree. White signifies the snow and silver the star of Bethlehem. The beauty of the tree is made or marred on the day on which the paper is bought. The children's skill, or lack of it, matters little.

4. Plan graded tasks; simple ornaments for the beginners to make, more complicated ones for the primary boys and girls.

5. Be sure to link the finger tasks with the Christmas message. Encourage the children to talk of the joy of those who are to receive or are to be bidden to behold the finished product as they work. Recall the stories told. Sing the Christmas carols.

Directions for Making Ornaments

For the Tiniest Ten Fingers

1. Paper chains. Cut strips of silver paper 4 x 1/2 inches. These are the usual paper chains of the kindergarten. Lap the two ends with a bit of paste, slip the next link through, lap and paste. Cut a few smaller strips (2 x 1/4 inches) for the older children to make. The tiny chain is dainty and pretty but too tedious for small fingers.

2. Popcorn strings. String on a strong thread, using large needle.

3. Strings of circles and straws. Cut small circles of paper (about 1 inch in diameter). Cut soda straws in inch lengths. String with needle and thread, paper and straw, paper and straw. This material can be bought, ready to use, from a kindergarten supply house. Ask for parquetry circles and straws for stringing.

4. Rosettes. Cut from crepe paper strips 3 x 1/2 inches. Taper at the ends to simulate flower petals. Thread one at a time through the center with large needle. Tie in a bunch to look like a flower. These are very effective when tied close at the joints of the branches.

For Middle-Sized Ten Fingers

1. Bells. Cut a cardboard pattern of a complete bell (see illustration giving half of bell). Use this to cut a bell of red cover paper. Decorate by pasting on each side a tiny picture cut from an old Christmas card. Punch hole at top for tying to tree.

2. Lanterns. Cut red cover paper 8 x 4 inches. Fold once, making a square book. Fold each edge to center. This divides the paper in four. Lap and paste so as to make a three-sided lantern. Paste a picture cut from an old Christmas card on each side. Punch the center top of each side and attach red strings in each hole for handle.

Lanterns (see pattern).

Cut paper square. Fold in book form. In the diagram the folded edge is at the bottom. Cut at folded edge, as shown in diagram. Open and paste edges together. Use a strip of paper for the handle.

3. Candles. Cut white paper 6 x 4 inches. Roll and paste at the edge. The children will probably have more success if they roll the paper over a pencil. Cut a little tapering piece of red paper and paste in one end for flame. Snip at the bottom so that the candle may be set on a branch. Fasten by sticking a pin through beneath the branch.

4. Strings of bells. Cut half circles with diameters about 3 inches. Curve so as to form a cone. Paste at the edge. String on a thread. To keep bells equally distant on string take a double stitch through the tip of the cone when stringing.

5. Chains without paste. The diagram is the actual size. Cut double. The folded edge is represented by a dotted line in the diagram. (Figure I.) Join by slipping one through the other. (Figure II.)

For the Largest Ten Fingers

1. Christmas roses. Place a hard candy in the center of a piece of white tissue paper 4 x 4 inches. Twist and tie. Trim the points off to resemble the petals of a flower. Streak with red water color, adding a black center and markings. Tie close to the tree with the ends of the thread left in making the flower. A paper trimmed tree needs something of weight to pull down the branches. Stones may be used for the inside of these flowers if candies are not desired.

2. Clothespin dolls. Cut from a magazine a picture of a child's head. Tie at the top of a clothespin. Then tie on a dress of white tissue paper, making a ruffle at the neck.

3. Butterflies. Cut a complete butterfly from pattern, using double white tissue paper. Slip in between the teeth of the clothespin. A little paste is needed at the base of the wings to hold the paper in place. Streak the wings with water color and paint the clothespin black to represent the body. Tie a gold cord at the head of the clothespin, leaving the ends long to resemble antennæ. The pattern given here is the size of a toy clothespin which will make a more effective butterfly. If regular clothespins are used enlarge the wings.

4. Brownies. Draw a circle 2 1/2 inches in diameter on brown cover paper. This is the body of the brownie. Then draw a smaller circle, touching the first at its circumference. This will be the head. Cut these out but do not cut them apart. The eyes are tiny circles of white paper pasted on with the eyeballs painted on with black paint. Paint in the other features and the buttons. Give him a triangular cap of red paper. Punch at shoulders and hips and tie in red strings for arms and legs. Tie bits of red paper to these for hands and feet. Tie him to the tree by his pointed cap.

5. Icicles. Cut silver paper in long strip 1 inch wide. Roll like an old-fashioned lamp lighter. Fasten the end by pasting. Pinch between thumb and finger down the length of the roll, first one side and then the other. Tie thread at the top to fasten to tree.

THE NATIVITY AND THE CONSECRATION OF SIR GALAHAD

By EUGENE R. and ELIZABETH B. SHIPPEN

These pageants for Christmas and Easter are especially prepared for presentation in the church. They were so successfully given in the Second Church in Boston that requests for the text have been received from cities as far distant as San Francisco. Detailed and complete suggestions are given for presentation.

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For the Teacher's Ten Fingers

The star of Bethlehem belongs at the top of the tree. Let nothing be placed above it. That is the symbol of the Christ Child's birthday. Let not old Saint Nicholas, good and jolly as he is, take the place of the star, either in your children's hearts or on the topmost branch of the tree they trim.

The Christmas star should be a five-pointed star and the children cannot make it. Let this be the teacher's contribution, but it will be of more value if the children see you make it. Sit near them and work when they work. Make the pattern first. Cut a cardboard star from this and cover with silver paper.

To make a star take a square of paper and fold in book form. Make a point (A) at ⅓ of the distance from the open edge at the bottom. (Figure I.) Bring upper corner of folded edge (B) down to the point A. (Figure II.) Fold corner C back as far as it will go. (Figure III.) Fold corner D over at the back to meet corner E. (Figure IV.) Cut as the arrow indicates. (Figure IV.)

Last and Most Important

Let all the children experiment with the materials. They will take the chain strips that are left over and turn them into wonderful stars. Ideas come as one handles the paper. Try it yourself with the scraps. Let them try it and know the joy of creating. Some one will hit upon a fascinating new ornament that has not been described here.

Patterns for Tree Ornaments

FIVE-POINTED STAR

Figure I

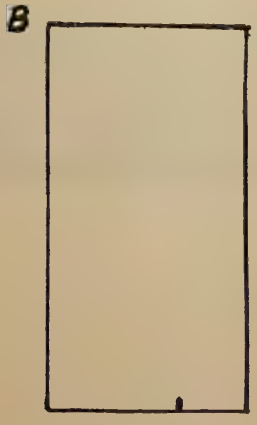


Figure II

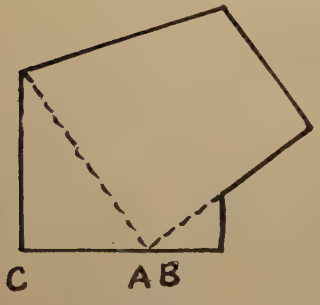


Figure III

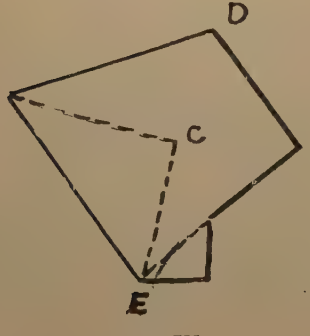
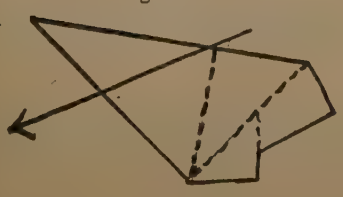
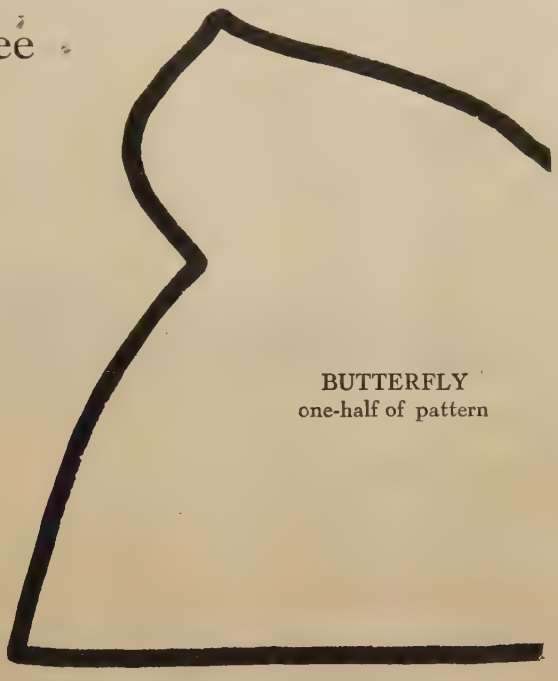


Figure IV



BUTTERFLY
one-half of pattern



BELL
one-half of pattern

CHAINS WITHOUT PASTE

Figure I

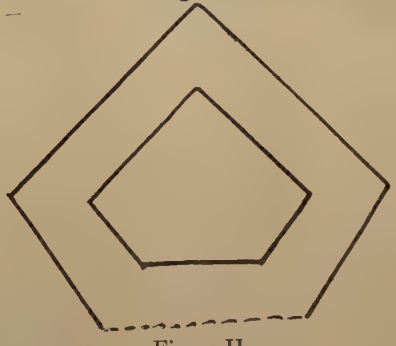
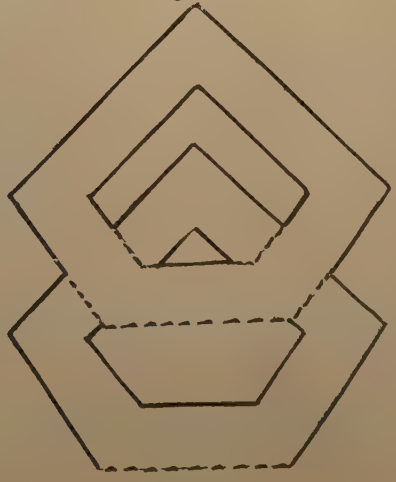
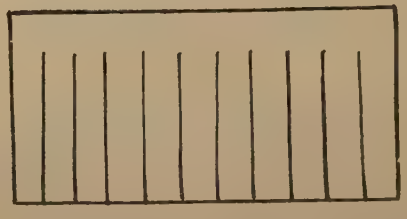


Figure II



LANTERNS



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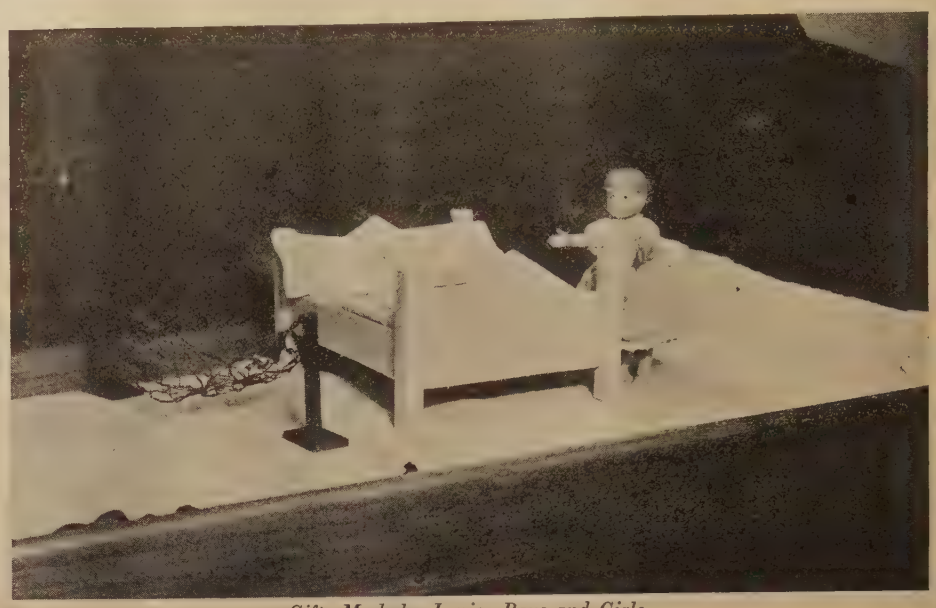
Practical Ideas from Elementary Workers

The following paragraphs have been received from elementary workers and are accounts of practical ideas which they have found helpful in their departments



Gifts Made by Junior Boys and Girls

Teaching the Christmas Story

"HOW do you teach the Christmas story as given in Luke, to your third-year primary children?" asked Miss Eager-for-Suggestions.

"We don't do it," replied Miss Cut-and-Dried. "It is so long they won't learn it. Children nowadays have so much school work, they can't learn a lot of Scripture as they used to years ago."

"Oh, the children in our department love to do it," said Miss Progressive. "Last year they made the loveliest books illustrating the story, and their interest in it was a joy.

"The teacher typed the first verses, Luke 2: 8-9, on slips of paper (as she found that some of the children had no Bibles), and asked them to take the verses home and copy them in their very best writing, while they were learning them. She gave them uniform sheets of paper to use, asking them to bring them back the next Sunday.

"In the meantime, she prepared booklets of rather heavy colored paper, large enough to leave a good margin when the written sheet was pasted on the page. On the cover she pasted one of the many good nativity pictures, and printed in white ink, or water colors, *The Christmas Story.* She asked the children to begin to write about half way down on the first page, as the reference was short. At the top they pasted a small picture of Plockhorst's *Apparition to the Shepherds.*

"Then the real interest began, and the children were eager to take home the next group of verses, 10-12, which were illustrated with Dobson's *Bethlehem.* For the third group of verses, 13-16, they used Lerolle's *Arrival of the Shepherds,* and for the last group, 17-20, *Nativity,* by Grass, was added.

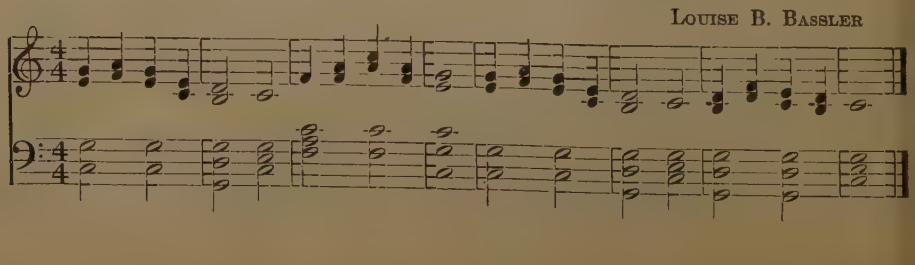
"The books were all kept at Sunday school until completed. As the children arranged the written story and pictures in their books they studied and talked about them until each had a real meaning and the birth of the Christ-child was not just a bit of memory work which must be done; it was the story of God's love, and their books were taken home as real treasures."

"Perhaps my children would like that too," meditated Miss Cut-and-Dried, while Miss Eager-for-Suggestions was already on her way to the printing office to get paper for the booklets.—*S. Elizabeth Nelson,* Canandaigua, N. Y.

(Continued on page 135)

A Christmas Song for Beginners

LOUISE B. BASSLER



JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

Jesus grew and grew till he was a man.

Jesus loves little children. He loves you.

These children have come to see Jesus.

He is holding one in his arms.

Who brought the children to see Jesus?

Their mothers brought them to see Jesus.

Some one told the children to go away, but Jesus said, "No, do not send the children away. Let them come."

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Jesus loves little children. He wants them to be happy.

The children love Jesus.

Glimpses of Jesus in Picture and Story for the Youngest Child,
Copyright, 1923, by Jenny B. Merrill

Nazareth

NAZARETH

Jesus lived in one of these little houses
when he was a little boy.

I wonder which house?

The carpenter shop was in the house.

Jesus liked to climb the hill.

There were trees on the hill.

His little friends climbed with him.
One boy was John.

JESUS HELPING

Jesus grew as you do.

He is not a baby in this picture. He is even bigger than you are. What is Jesus doing?

He is sawing boards to help his father.

His father is a carpenter.

A carpenter has a hammer and nails.

He has a big saw. What can a carpenter make?

Jesus' mother is working too.

What will she make?

Jesus likes to help his father and his mother. Do you?

Winterstein

Jesus and John

The Boyhood of Jesus

Carl Mueller

JESUS AND JOHN

Here you see Jesus and John.

John is Jesus' cousin.

John loves Jesus and Jesus loves John

They go to school together.

They are learning to read Bible stories.

Mother will tell you Bible stories.

Which boy is Jesus?

Save a life for Christmas

WHILE you are giving, give health. There are thousands of sufferers from tuberculosis, forgotten by all the world except the Tuberculosis Association. It needs your support to carry on its life-saving work. You help when you buy Christmas Seals—the Liberty Bonds in the war upon consumption.

Buy Christmas Seals! Buy as many as you can. The Great White Plague can be stamped out entirely. Christmas Seals are saving many lives. Buy Christmas Seals, and save a life for Christmas.

Stamp out Tuberculosis with Christmas Seals

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Practical Ideas

(Continued from page 132)

Children's Gifts of Handwork

The doll and her wardrobe, the bed and its furnishings, the raffia hammock and standards (shown in the picture on page 132), were made by a group of junior boys and girls and sent to the children's ward of a city hospital. The boys made the working drawing, sawed the parts, joined and painted the bed. The girls made the mattress, sheets, pillows, cases, comfortable, bedspread, and dressed the doll. One of the younger boys gave a gay-colored raffia hammock, and its wooden standards, all of which he had made. The children voted as to where their gifts should be sent, and took great pleasure in packing the box.—*Harriet C. Poppe*, Buffalo, N. Y.

A Christmas Song
(For Beginners)

Little snowflakes falling (1)
Cover all the earth;
Little children singing
Tell of Jesus' birth.

Shepherds on the hillside, (2)
Watching o'er their sheep,
Hear the angel voices,
Waken from their sleep.

Mary, in the stable, (3)
Rocks her Babe to sleep,
Lays Him in the manger, (4)
Angels watch will keep.

High up in the heavens, (5)
See, a shining star!
It will lead the wise men,
From their country far.

Gifts for Baby Jesus, (6)
Lovingly they bring,
Low they bow before Him,
Hail Him as their King!

Motions:

(1) Raise hands above head and bring down with fluttering motion of fingers.
(2) Eyes closed, head resting upon left hand. At third line, open eyes wide, lift head as if startled.
(3) Fold arms and rock gently.
(4) Extend arms and lower gently.
(5) Point upward with right hand.
(6) Cup hands and extend forward.

(See music, page 132)

Louise B. Bassler, Wilkinsburg, Pa.

Some Things We Did Last Christmas Time

LAST Christmas we had a very enjoyable time with our posters. For the background we used a piece of grayish blue cardboard 26x9½ inches and for the figures gray paper. The stars—both the large and tiny ones—were of gold paper. The children helped paste and put the posters together after we had had the

(Continued on page 136)

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Holy, Holy, Holy
Abide With Me
Onward, Christian Soldiers
The Crucifix
Beautiful Isle of Somewhere
Lead, Kindly Light
Face to Face
Rock of Ages
The Palms
Come All Ye Faithful
Open the Gates of the Temple
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Battle Hymn of the Republic
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"I opened the book at random. My eye fell on the lesson for February 4, the subject being 'The Grace of Gratitude,' and the Scripture text the miracle of the healing of the ten lepers. I studied the lesson as though I were going to teach it the following Sunday. I used no other helps. I approached it as I thought an average teacher would do. I imagined I had before me a class of older boys. I read the printed Bible verses, Luke 17: 11-19. Then I acquainted myself with the author's outline, and followed it up with a careful reading of the five and a half pages of interpretation and application. At the conclusion of this process I felt able to go before my class and conduct an interesting, intelligent and practical study of the lesson. When a book meets a test of this character I am ready to give it my commendation.
"The outline of the book, the arrangement of its material, and the different kinds of type used, serve to bring out the truth clearly and to emphasize what needs emphasis. Dr. Snowden's scholarly habits, his evangelical attitude toward the Scriptures, and his acquaintance with the needs of those times, make him a safe and able teacher."
—CHARLES P. WILES, D.D., Department S.S. Literature, United Lutheran Church.

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Practical Ideas

(Continued from page 135)

stories in the Beginners' course. Anabel said, "There's the little town of Bethlehem."

The Sunday before Christmas we gave each child a little red candle wrapped in a slip of white paper upon the inside of which we wrote:

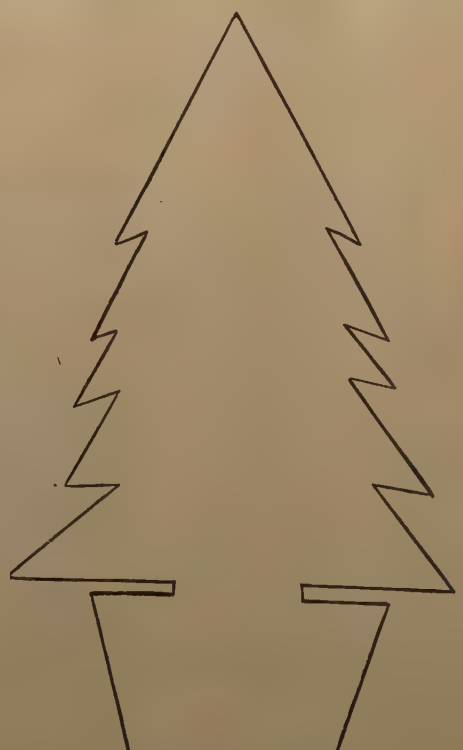
"DEAR MOTHER:

On Christmas eve, while the candle burns for the little Lord Jesus' birthday, please tell the story of the shepherds and of the Wise-men; help Junior to sing *The Little Lord Jesus* and to say the Bible verse in connection with his usual prayer."

As ever, with us, it was a "giving Christmas." Our December missionary offering (the first Sunday of the month) consisted of toys—old ones in good condition or new ones—for children who come into a settlement house in our own city. Later, envelopes decorated with Christmas seals were sent home with the invitations for the party to be used for a "Christmas Offering to help make little children happy who have no daddies or mothers." This was part of our school's offering for a Children's Home in a distant part of the state.

The party invitations we made from white paper. We represented the branches with green crayola, the trunk with brown and the tub with red. Around the top of the green side we printed the verse, "All the trees of the wood sing for joy." Ps. 96: 12, and on the back, the invitation.

—*Louise Adams*, Albany, N. Y.



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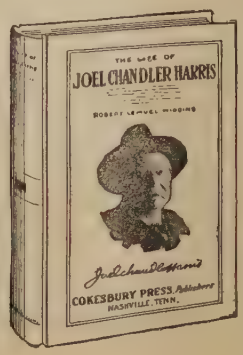

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The Impotent Star

(Continued from page 103)

I have less in thee, thou Creator and Designer of the kingdom? No.

The choir of boys is practicing for the early service. Their clear, high voices come up to me over the wakening city—

"Star of Wonder, Star of Night,
Star of royal beauty bright—
Onward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to the perfect Light."—

they sing. No, my soul! It is *not* an impotent star. Rather it is in very truth a star of Might against whose shining beams the powers of darkness battle in vain. Onward leading—still proceeding it shall one day guide us to the perfect Light.

Books to Read

Wonders of Missions—Caroline Atwater Mason.

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The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets—Jane Addams.

For a New America—Coe Hayne.

League or War?—Irving Fisher.

The Christian Crusade for a Warless World—Sidney L. Gulick.

Religion and Business—Roger W. Babson.

Political Christianity—A. Maude Royden.

Dare We Be Christians?—Walter Rauschenbusch.

The Gift

(Continued from page 105)

coming is a part of the Christmas story. The slaves bore the gifts on cushions, or held aloft—variety is agreeable—handed them to their monarch, who offered them at the manger and then prostrated himself, the slaves retiring to the back of stage, as they gathered one by one.

After the close of part two, the beautiful hymn that seems an epitome of the Christmas lesson, *Love Came Down at Christmas*, was sung and the service closed with the benediction by the pastor. This hymn may be found in Hutchins' Revised Episcopal Hymnal but if it is unobtainable, another favorite may be substituted.

CHRISTMAS NIGHT

Bells are ringing,
Hearts are singing,
Snow is white,
Home is bright—
O happy night!
Happy, Happy night!

—NANCY BYRD TURNER

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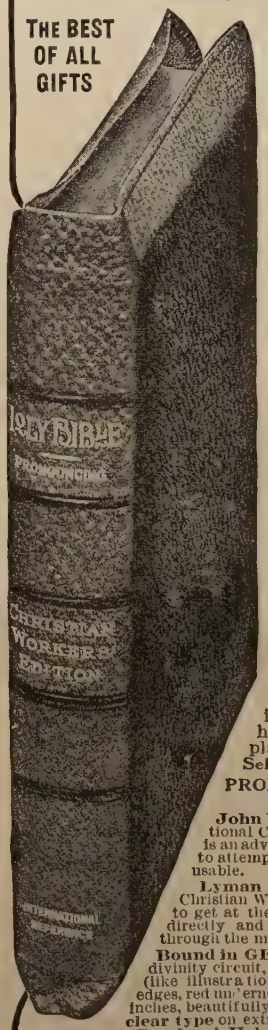

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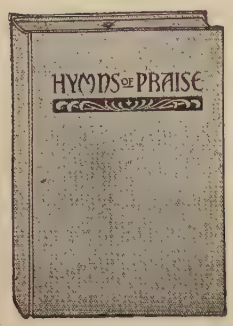

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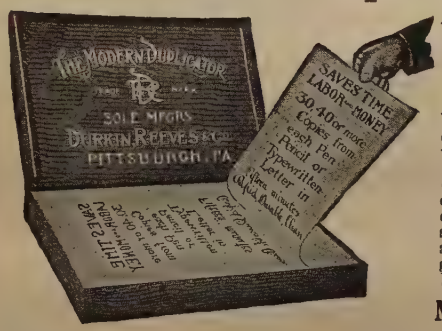
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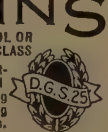

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Book Reviews

The God Experience, by E. Leigh Mudge. The Caxton Press, 420 Plum St., Cincinnati, Ohio. $2.00.

THIS study is a significant piece of pioneering in a field rich with practical possibilities for religious education. The bases of religious values have been formulated mostly by ascetic intellectualists, and by mystics. The one group more or less convinced our minds, and if in the depths of us we felt an emptiness and a chill, we were apologetic for our limited comprehension or humiliated by our lack of spirituality. The mystics' attempt to express what they insisted must remain inexpressible seemed to us, according to our temperament, ineffable illumination or the vapid vagaries of abnormal personalities. The author's frank acknowledgment that the authoritative basis of values lies not in reason but in feeling, and the scientifically experimental research into the laws of feeling reaction, let in a flood of daylight. The human soul uses its whole physical organism, and the reactions of the nerves are no more religious than those of the glands or the unstriped muscle; the stimulation which comes from a sympathetic nerve is not of a "lower" order than that from the auditory nerve. The retina is not more sacred than the adrenal gland. These seem to be his premises, and he has proved to one who will honestly analyze his own experiences that the intimate senses are even more vitally concerned in the God experience than are the articulative senses. Then must not our whole plan of religious education make sure that the child's God experiences stimulate those strains and tensions which exalt and expand the growing personality instead of depressing and inhibiting it?

The studies of sense elements in biblical and other religious literature open a fascinating new field of enjoyment.

Joy from Japan. Recreation Programs. Arranged by Catherine Atkinson Miller. Cover design and Posters by Bruce Edward Howden. Heidelberg Press.

This is a timely publication, as Japan is the subject of missionary study in all the churches. The book is unique. It not only discusses the place of play in the program of missionary education but it devotes seventeen chapters to plans for recreation programs; such as: *A Jaunt to Old Japan, An Outdoor Picnic or Indoor Festival for Everybody, A Night in Wonder Land, A Ghost Party, The Landing of the Treasure Ship, A Banquet Program, The Feast of Dolls*—arranged both as a party program and a program for a mother and daughter banquet—*The Feast of Lanterns, The Pink Persimmon Tree, A Japanese Fantasy*, arranged as an American stunt. The legends and fairy tales suggested for use in program building are given in full and there are many supplementary suggestions.

Plays and games cannot fail to make missionary education interesting and informing, in addition to providing an hour or more of delightful entertainment for the young people. Miss Miller, who is Secretary of Young People's Work for the Reformed Church in the U. S., has the rare ability of visualizing the whole and yet giving details sufficient to make it possible for any young people's society, mission band or organized class to use these games, stories and programs.

Junior Method in the Church School, by Marie Cole Powell. The Abingdon Press, N. Y. $1.50, by mail, $1.65.

These little plays are simple enough for almost any church to undertake, yet bright and vivid enough to prove fascinating to any audiences. They are designed for Sunday-school classes, Young People's Societies and mission study groups.

This book covers a much wider field than its title seems to indicate at first glance. Yet it is obvious that method must justify itself by reason of its fitness to meet all the aspects of a situation. It is in this larger sense that the word method applies to this study of the junior age which Mrs. Powell has made. It is a study of the social relationships, the personal characteristics, needs and capacities of boys and girls between the ages of nine and eleven, inclusive. In the light of these facts, the author discusses curricula and lesson courses, types of teaching and organization, the use of stories, training in worship and service, manual work, dramatization, relation to the church and the qualifications of the teacher. The book is full of valuable suggestion, and, fortunately, is not restricted to the conventional limits.

Spring in the Brown Meadow, and Other Pantomimes for Little Children, by Elisabeth Edland. The Abingdon Press. 35 cents.

There is a charm and simplicity about "Spring in the Brown Meadow" and other pantomimes for little children that sets them quite apart from the majority of dramatizations written for that most fastidious and discriminating of audiences, the boy and girl of from four to ten years of age.

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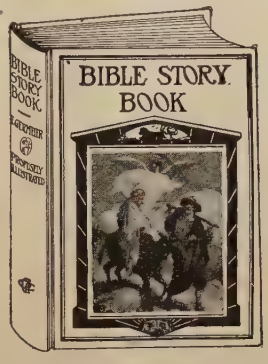

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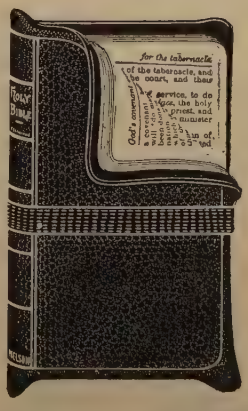

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The Christmas Festival

(Continued from page 123)

reverence tell the story from the Bible, "There were shepherds in the field."

Be prepared with a new prayer for the occasion, simple but with a Christmas significance, different in quality of expression.

After this part of the program is over, place the wreaths on the heads of the children and present wands and symbols for the processional as they move all around the church singing, chanting and caroling.

Trimming the Tree.

"This wonderful tree with its branches wide,
Is always blooming at Christmas tide.

"This Christmas tree with its branches wide,
Bears lovely gifts for the Christmas tide.

"A radiant star threw its beams so wide,
To herald the early Christmas tide."

When the children return to their room they gather around the Christmas tree singing their carols. Each child finds a place on the tree for whatever he has carried in the processional, the wands, ornaments, stars, etc. They then remove their head ornaments and hang them on the tree singing, *O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,* or *A wonderful tree is our Christmas tree.*

After singing the final *Merry Christmas to all,* as they pass out, the teacher presents them with her gift, something worth while to be a remembrance of this happy time. A picture of the Christ-child, possibly, and his mother with a Christmas verse inscribed.

Christmas music to be played to children.

Children's Christmas eve—Neils Gade.
"In a country far away"—Gottschalk. (Violin obligato.)
A Christmas Festival Service—Nora Smith.

Christmas Stories.

Why the Chimes Rang—Alden.
Sabots of Little Wolff—Coppee.
Story of the Other Wise-man—Van Dyke.
The First Christmas Presents—Wiltse.

Songs.

Once a little baby lay.
Shine out, blessed star.
O little town of Bethlehem.
Away in a manger.
Many others found in *Songs for Little Children*—Miss Baker.

Poems.

A Birthday Gift—Christina Rossetti.
Away in a manger—Martin Luther.
Why do bells for Christmas Ring? and other Christmas poems in *The Melody of Childhood,* by Lydia Avery Coonley Ward.

The Prophets

(Continued from page 121)

In order to control different lights, switches will be necessary. Use the old-fashioned "knife" switch, which is noiseless, instead of the key or button switch. For the management of lights, one operator is needed on each side of the stage.

Costumes. In costuming the prophets, follow Sargent's frieze, of which colored prints can be obtained from the Boston Public Library or from Curtis and Cameron, Boston. Use only heavy material, as nothing light or thin will take the proper folds, and the figures will lack dignity and distinction. Wool is of course best, but excellent results, for the white robes, are obtained by using a cotton material such as is used on dining-tables for "silence-cloths." For the colored robes, this material could be dyed, but portieres in plain colors can often be used, in heavy repps, or other materials that take good folds. The draping of the robes requires some skill, an artistic eye, and a little practice, plus infinite safety pins. It should not be tried out first in connection with a general rehearsal, as it will involve many people in much waste of time. When it has been worked out, it will take about five minutes to robe each prophet. They should all wear sandals, which can be obtained of any costumer, and light colored wool golf stockings.

Very little rehearsal is necessary. One or two evenings will be required to work out the lighting, but any figure, variously draped to test lights, will do to work on. The chief difficulty, in the case of the prophets is in making them walk slowly enough as they enter, turn, and take their places. This must be insisted upon, and rehearsed carefully in conjunction with the reading. One short evening rehearsal ought to suffice.

The costuming and grouping of the Annunciation and Nativity tableaux may follow whatever picture is chosen as model. For Mary, a "Madonna blue" robe over a gathered white guimpe, with a white veil, is beautiful and perfectly safe. Not so safe, but even more beautiful if exactly right, is a rose-colored robe over a white guimpe, a madonna blue cloak of thin wool to subdue the rose, and a white or paler blue veil. Study of the Italian masters will furnish the best guidance.

A Cradle Roll Book

ON pages 133, 134 will be found eight more pages of the Cradle Roll Book, *Glimpses of Jesus in Picture and Story for the Youngest Child*, by Jenny B. Merrill. The first eight pages with a description of the book were published in the October number, the second eight in November.

These stories are intended for use with very little children or for children just beginning to read. Eight pages will be printed every month until the book is complete. It is suggested that teachers and parents save the pages and add to the book from month to month.

To make the book, cut out the page on the dotted line at the left. Fold bottom half of page under. Fold left side under. Cut folds at bottom and you will have the second eight pages of the book. The picture to accompany the last story will always appear in the following issue.

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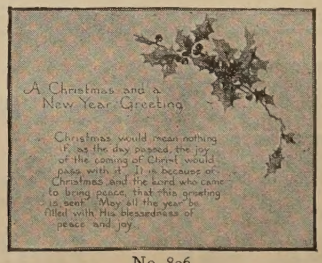

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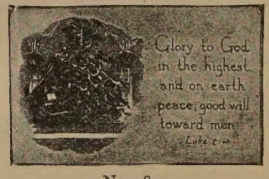

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The Christmas Story in India

(Continued from page 117)

Scene IV. Scripture Reading, Luke 2: 8-15.
The Shepherds.

Music, *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night*, sung by older boys.

Scene V. Scripture Reading, Isaiah 6: 6.
All the participants in preceding scenes and little children singing *The Light of the World is Jesus.*

In the first scene Mary is shown busy about her daily work. The angel appears bearing a scroll from which she reads part of verses 28, 32, 33, from the first chapter of Luke. Following this, while Mary stands in an attitude of fear and adoration, the voices of girls chanting *The Magnificat* are heard. None of the singers is visible to the audience, however, but all can be distinctly heard.

In the second scene the rude box filled with straw holds the attention of all. We had grass strewed over the stage, and the box, which was raised a little, was filled with straw. Inside the box we had placed an acetylene bicycle lamp in such a position that the light fell on the faces of Mary and Joseph who were sitting beside the cradle. The light was dimmed the least bit so it should not be a glare. While Mary and Joseph were sitting beside the cradle a group of girls sang *Silent Night.*

The setting was the same in the third scene as in the second. In fact, the second scene remains the central one in the three which follow. The Wise-men came in from the back of the auditorium. They sang the first verse of *We Three Kings of Orient Are* before they began their march down the central aisle bearing in their hands their gifts. They came onto the platform and presented their gifts to Mary, kneeling a moment in worship of the newborn King.

In the fourth scene the shepherds were outside while a group of boys sang, *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night.* Then the voices of the shepherds were heard talking about the story which the angel had told them. They entered the stage from the side. When they stepped on the stage they became silent and knelt or stood in an adoring group around Mary, Joseph and the cradle.

In the fifth scene all those in the four preceding scenes were grouped about the cradle. Then from the sides of the stage came two lines of little children, boys and girls, singing *The Light of the World is Jesus.* When they had finished singing, the audience rose and sang one verse of, *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name,* and were then dismissed with the benediction and went out quietly and reverently.

The Magic Eve

(Continued from page 127)

addition of red crepe paper streamers hanging from the waist down over the white skirt. The wings may also be bordered with red. There should be a quantity of silver in the costume: silver stars painted on the red streamers, a wand in silver and red, a crown formed of silver tinsel and a silver star, and the wings spangled with silver stars.

The Waits will be attired in old English costume. Loose smocks of satine are suggested with soft pointed shoes of the same material fashioned somewhat like bedsocks and soft caps turned back off the face. Suggested colors, a combination of gray and red.

Christmas Tree should be dressed in a sheathlike costume of green. She should have brown shoes and stockings and her feet should be under the snow in the second scene and also covered in the third. From her dress should extend green wires from which are hung strips of green crepe paper with fringed edges. They should be of such lengths as to produce the effect of a tree tapering toward the top. She should wear a pointed cap of green on which have been pasted strips of the fringed crepe paper and in the third scene it should have at its peak a star.

Jack Rabbit's costume should be of gray cotton flannel with coverings for arms, head and feet as well as body to give the effect of a skin.

The Holly Wreaths should have dresses of green crepe paper trimmed with artificial holly and with holly wreaths about their heads. They may also have sashes of red tied about their waists. In connection with their entrance a simple little drill may be worked out. In that case they should carry wreaths of holly to use in their figures.

The Oranges should be boys dressed in clown suits of orange color, stuffed out at the waist. On their heads they should wear caps of half an orange skin cocked on one side and held in place by a black elastic under the chin.

The Nuts should have tight-fitting brownie suits trimmed with nut shells hanging from neck and waist and artificial eyes of half walnut shells as indicated in the text. These half shells should be painted white with a hole in the center where the pupil should come, and an iris of green with a black rim around it. Dashes of red may be added to the white. They should be adjusted to both eyes together and held between the brow and the cheek by the contraction of the muscles.

The Popcorn Maids should be in frilly white with necklaces of strings of popcorn and festoons of it over their skirts.

The Christmas Clowns should be in parti-colored suits of red and white with red buttons and either red or white shoes. If it should seem advisable to have this group one of girls, the somersaults may be omitted and other evolutions substituted. The suits may then be of white material cut from a pajama pattern, preferably sleeveless. About the neck should be a ruff of red malines, small rosettes of it should serve as buttons, a band of the same material should encircle the wrists with a pompon on the outside of each wrist, and similar pompons should be placed at the ankles of the trousers. A soft pointed cap of white with a band of malines at the forehead and a rosette at the peak completes the costume.

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Reviewed by ELISABETH EDLAND

Dulcy. Comedy, featuring Constance Talmadge. 7 reels. Exchange, First National, 729 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Inexperienced young wife, very much in love with her husband, tries to help him with his business. She fails utterly, but all turns out right in the end. In parts 5 and 7, eliminate subtitles containing words, "damn," "darned" and "jackass." In part 6, eliminate subtitle, "Don't let anyone know your brother isn't Schuyler Van Dyke." In part 7, eliminate all suggestion of suicide.

False Alarm. Out of the Inkwell comedy. 1 reel. Exchange, Max Fleischer, 128 East 45th Street, New York City. The Inkwell clown takes charge of a fire department.

The Cat's Whiskers. Æsop's Film Fable. 1 reel. Exchange, Pathe, 1600 Broadway, New York City. The poor rival wins the lady's love by saving her little brother from drowning. Moral: "They are rich who have true friends."

The Great Japanese Catastrophe. 2½ reels. Exchange, Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, 729 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Scenes showing how earthquake, fire and flood devastated 1,300 acres in Japan, great tidal wave, ruined street, houses and temples, American built structures escape destruction, over one million people homeless, finding shelter among the ruins, a ruined silk mill, refugees arriving at Kobe, Tokyo, before the disaster, and after.

To the Summit of Mount Hood. 1 reel. Exchange, National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures, 130 West 46th Street, New York City. Burton Holmes. Mt. Hood, a peak of the Cascades Ranges, in the northern part of Wasco County in Oregon. Climbers start early in the morning from Government camp, putting on grease paint to prevent sunburn, beautiful effects above the clouds, with the valley 8,000 feet below, Mt. Jefferson in the distance, at the Crater Rock, crossing the Hog-back, 11,936 feet above the sea level.

Amiable Animals All. 1 reel. Exchange, Community Motion Picture Service, 46 West 24th Street, New York City. Moving day for Mrs. Cat, another League of Nations, cats, dogs, mice, and birds, prize dogs at dog show, a California rodeo cowboy stunts, a farm in Quebec where Shetland ponies are raised, hunting the bull moose, sounding moose call, royal elephants and camels at Lahore, India, an ostrich farm in Georgia, birds of a desert isle, baby sea gulls, a pelican rookery, Mrs. Hen mothers a family of silver pheasants and baby ducks.

Musko and Musume. 1 reel. Exchange, National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures. Boys and girls of Japan, public schools, calisthenic drill, field day, Red Cross training boy soldiers, training, sea-side camps for delicate children, physical training.

Playing the Game. 1 reel. Exchange National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures. Games played at Dartmouth College, baseball, football, bucking machine; Lacross an old Indian game; Penn., Oxford, Cambridge international track meet, track training, sprinting, pole vaulting.